9 770261 307668 36

The University Guide 2024

- League tables
- How to choose your uni
- Tips on student life





Free 52-page magazine inside

The Guardian

Saturday
9 September 2023
£3.80
From £2.03 for subscribers

Newspaper of the year

MPs tell Sunak: we have to widen access to Covid jabs

Call for over-50s to get vaccine amid concerns over new Pirola variant

Rowena Mason
Andrew Gregory
Denis Campbell

Ministers are facing urgent calls to consider widening availability of Covid vaccines, amid concern that the new Pirola variant of the disease could put pressure on the NHS and cause more sickness among the workforce this winter.

As data appeared to show Pirola spreading, Rishi Sunak and Steve Barclay, the health secretary, were urged to rethink their decision to restrict vaccines to those aged 65 and those in vulnerable groups.

A group of MPs wrote to the prime minister yesterday warning that the NHS may struggle to cope with another winter of high numbers of Covid cases, while one leading virologist said the health service was in for a "rocky ride" and called for a return to jabs for over-50s.

Members of the all-party group on coronavirus, led by Layla Moran, a Lib Dem MP, called on Sunak to consider extending the booster programme this autumn to more groups such as those aged 50 to 64, and to help make the Covid jab publicly available to buy privately, like the flu vaccine.

They wrote to Sunak and Barclay amid concern about the Covid-19 variant BA.2.86, nicknamed Pirola. Scientists have noted the high number of mutations it carries, which raises the possibility that it could evade the immune system more easily or be more transmissible.

In a briefing note yesterday, the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) said an outbreak at a care home in Norfolk and other cases across the UK indicated there was likely to be community transmission of the strain, but said it was too early to judge the full extent of its spread.

The NHS is launching its autumn Covid vaccine programme this Monday, with those in care homes for older people and people who are housebound the first to get the offer of jabs. From Monday 18 September, those who are 65 and over as well as the clinically 2 →

Scandi Feast special issue



Modi mission for PM
Rishi Sunak and his wife, Akshata Murty, meet schoolchildren in Delhi yesterday before a G20 summit that the PM hopes will pave the way for a trade deal with India
Pages 12-13



PHOTOGRAPH: DAN KITWOOD/PA WIRE

Richard Osman 'I'm an alpha introvert'

Saturday



The joy of Interrailing alone

Travel



VISIT…

LANZAROTE Caliente.com

Inside your Saturday paper



Quick crossword
Page 58

Puzzles
Journal pages 11-12

Killer sudoku and cryptic crossword
Journal page 12

Weather
Page 59

Contact

For missing sections call **0800 839 100**.
For individual departments, call the Guardian switchboard: **020 3353 2000**.
For the Readers' editor (corrections & clarifications on specific editorial content), call **020 3353 4736** between 10am and 1pm UK time Monday to Friday excluding public holidays, or email **guardian.readers@theguardian.com**.
Letters for publication should be sent to **guardian.letters@theguardian.com** or the address on the letters page.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
The recycled paper content of UK newspapers in 2017 was 64.6%

Guardian News & Media, Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9GU. 020-3353 2000. Fax 020-7837 2114. In Manchester: Centurion House, 129 Deansgate, Manchester M3 3WR. Telephone Sales: 020-7611 9000. The Guardian lists links to third-party websites, but does not endorse them or guarantee their authenticity or accuracy. Back issues from Historic Newspapers: 0870-165 1470 guardian.backissuenewspapers.co.uk. Published by Guardian News & Media, Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9GU, and at Centurion House, 129 Deansgate, Manchester M3 3WR. Printed at Reach Watford Limited, St Albans Road, Watford, Herts WD24 7RG; Reach Oldham Limited, Hollinwood Avenue, Chadderton, Oldham OL9 8EP; Reach Saltire Ltd, 110 Fifty Pitches Place, Glasgow G51 4EA; and by Irish Times Print Facility, 4080 Kingswood Road, Citywest Business Campus, Dublin 24. No. 55,071, Saturday 9 September 2023. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office ISSN 0261-3077.

MPs call for Covid jabs to be given to all over-50s

Continued *from page 1*



▼ *A Covid jab administered in 2021. There are concerns the Pirola variant may put pressure on the NHS*
PHOTOGRAPH: NATHAN STIRK/GETTY IMAGES

vulnerable, carers and those living with people who are immunosuppressed will start to be invited for vaccines.

The government brought forward the vaccine programme by a month in response to the BA.2.86 variant but did not widen the eligibility criteria, saying it would follow the advice of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). However, Moran said: "As the government have been flexible about moving the date, they should also consider widening the groups it should be available to."

She said a key argument for agreeing to more boosters, such as allowing GPs to recommend people on a case-by-case basis, was preventing pressure on the NHS, and helping the economy by having fewer people off sick with the virus or long Covid.

"Our argument is that the government is being a bit cavalier and thinking this is just going to be fine."

She added: "It also does not make any sense to us that the vaccines will be available to buy in the US but not in the UK. I think a lot of people would want the option and it's not clear at the moment why it's not available ."

Steve McCabe, a Labour MP and vice chair of the all-party parliamentary group on access to medicines, also said there was a case for extending the programme to over-50s and other groups. "We should be focusing on older people, and yes of course on vulnerable people, but perhaps it should also include workers from groups who are likely to come into contact with the public," he said.

Pharmaceutical industry sources say there will not be private Covid jabs available in the UK until 2024 at the earliest.

Prof Lawrence Young, a virologist at the University of Warwick, said the government should "absolutely" extend the eligibility to the over-50s, and consider offering them to all adults.

The UK faces a "rocky ride" this winter amid growing concerns over new variants, he said, and ministers should reverse their decision to deny boosters to the under 65s.

"We're heading into a very uncertain time as evidenced by the recent upsurge in various variants of concern. I just don't understand, for the life of me, why this is any different to autumn 2022 when all over-50s were offered an extra dose."

Young said he understood the JCVI had taken cost effectiveness into account when making its recommendations. "But I think amid all this uncertainty and unpredictability about Covid, it would make much more sense to give the vaccine to as wide a population as possible."

He added: "The threat from Covid has not gone away. If anything, there's even more concern given the fact we've got waning immunity. Many folks won't have had a vaccine for a year or so. We've got new variants. I think we need to be protecting as many people as possible."

Dr Simon Williams, a public health researcher and lecturer in psychology at Swansea University, also called on ministers to reverse their decision to deny under-65s access to Covid jabs.

"Extending the Covid booster to over 50s would be a sensible precaution ahead of an uncertain winter," he said. "In the US, President Biden is encouraging all Americans to get an updated Covid-19 booster, in addition to an updated flu jab.

"It is right to prioritise those over 65 and clinically vulnerable, but in the UK the decision to limit to the over-65s only seems to have been made on too narrow a definition of cost-benefit. Cost-effectiveness, looked at from a broader perspective, is about more than just reducing deaths and hospitalisations."

Dr Andrew Hill, a visiting research fellow in pharmacology at Liverpool University, also said excluding the 12 million people aged 50-64 was "short-sighted". "These vaccines are known to be effective against the new Covid variants. There is no other way for people aged 50-65 to access Covid vaccines in the UK, especially as it looks like people who want them will not after all be able to get them privately."

> *'Our argument is that the government is being a bit cavalier and thinking this is just going to be fine'*
>
> **Layla Moran**
> *Lib Dem MP*

However, Prof Paul Hunter, an expert at the University of East Anglia in the epidemiology of infectious diseases, said denying under-65s jabs was "the correct decision". "If you look at the ONS survey data back from April the average number of infections people in England had had then was over two infections per person since the start of the pandemic [and] it will be more now," he said. "So almost every one of us has survived one, and most of us have already survived multiple Covid infections …"

Health sources said there were no plans to widen the availability of vaccines.

A Department of Health and Social Care spokesperson said: "We have accelerated the autumn flu and Covid-19 vaccine programmes to ensure greater protection, support those at greatest risk of severe illness and reduce the potential impact on the NHS.

"Those most at risk from winter illness – including people in care homes for older people, the clinically vulnerable, those aged 65 and over, health and social care staff, and carers – will be able to access a Covid vaccine from next week."

Steve Brine, the Conservative chair of parliament's health committee, said he thought it was right that the JCVI advice was being followed.

"The commercial pharma companies need to look at this as a commercial opportunity and if they've got a customer base then they need to meet that demand. If there's not a commercial basis then I refer you to JCVI advice. Other than doing a population-level vaccination programme, I don't know what the alternative is. I wouldn't be making any different decision if I were in the government now," he said.

'Deadly strain' of legionella found in new tests on barge

Diane Taylor

New testing of water samples on the Bibby Stockholm has confirmed a potentially deadly strain of legionella onboard, the Guardian has learned.

The presence of legionella bacteria on the barge, which the Home Office says can accommodate more than 500 asylum seekers, was initially detected by the testing of water samples on the first day people boarded on 7 August. It was publicly confirmed by the Home Office on 11 August and officials evacuated all 39 people onboard that day.

After the evacuation of the barge, its water system was flushed in the hope of eliminating the legionella bacteria. New tests were carried out on 15 August and the Home Office hoped the results would show there was no longer legionella onboard so that asylum seekers could return.

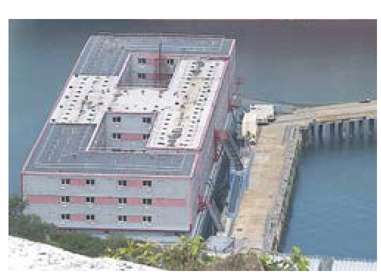
The Home Office has not yet announced the results. However, freedom of information data from Dorset council shared with the Guardian confirms that the most deadly strain of legionella – legionella pneumophila serogroup 1 – has been found in a galley pot wash hose outlet in tests conducted at 3.28pm on 15 August. According to the FoI response, this result was "unsatisfactory".

An inspection of the barge's pipework by Wessex Water identified problems that require repairs. The Home Office said these repairs could be carried out while people were onboard.

The discovery of legionella on the Bibby Stockholm was an embarrassment to the government as the barge was a key part of its policy to end the use of hotel accommodation for asylum seekers. The Home Office had provided assurances that all relevant health and safety checks had been carried out before moving people onboard.

Peter English, a retired public health consultant, said the results of the latest tests did not come as a surprise and that the strain of legionella identified was the most serious type.

"Remedial action needs to be taken. The system needs to be hyperchlorinated," he said. "That needs to be done for quite a long period. We wouldn't expect the plumbing in a barge of the sort of age the Bibby Stockholm is to be very wonderful, particularly because it had been empty for some time."



▲ *The Home Office says the barge can house more than 500 people*

It is understood that two of the 39 asylum seekers who were briefly onboard have found accommodation with relatives, but the remaining 37 say they do not want to return to the barge due to what they say are its inhumane conditions.

The 39 people affected sent a letter to Suella Braverman, the home secretary, documenting the poor conditions onboard and saying one person had attempted suicide. One of them, now living at a hotel, said: "Nobody can really bear to return to the ship. In addition to the water, the risk of fire and the spread of disease in this small space is very high."

A Home Office spokesperson said: "These are old test results. We have followed advice from UKHSA at all times and people will return to the barge in due course."

It is understood that further water samples were taken on 24 August.

Samaritans can be contacted on freephone 116 123, or email jo@samaritans.org or jo@samaritans.ie

Chanel's wartime work on 'both sides' to be shown at V&A's major retrospective



◀ *The show covers the life and work of Gabrielle Chanel, far left, pictured in 1931, ending with her death in 1971* PHOTOGRAPH: SHAROK HATAMI/SHUTTERSTOCK



Jess Cartner-Morley

Newly-unearthed documents that show the fashion designer Coco Chanel was a documented member of the French resistance during the second world war are to go on display at a major retrospective of her work – alongside contradictory evidence that she operated as a Nazi agent.

The exhibits relating to Chanel's activities in wartime Paris strike a serious note within what is likely to be the most glamorous exhibition of the year: Gabrielle Chanel – Fashion Manifesto, which opens at the V&A in London on 16 September.

"We couldn't do a show about Chanel and not address her wartime record," noted the curator, Oriole Cullen, who has expanded a show first created at the Palais Galliera in Paris in 2020 to delve more deeply into Chanel's links with Britain as well as her wartime activities.

Previously unseen files show the name "Gabrielle AKA Coco Chanel" on a list of 400,000 people whose part in the resistance is backed by official records. "We have verification from the French government, including a document from 1957 which confirms her active participation," said Cullen.

But the museum will also display strong evidence that Chanel collaborated with Nazi officers as an agent for the German government in occupied Paris, including transcripts of postwar interrogation of three Nazi officials who all separately name her as a trusted source.

"The new evidence doesn't exonerate her. It only makes the picture more complicated. All we can say is that she was involved with both sides," said Cullen.

Cullen points to the designer's childhood spent in a French convent after the death of her mother and disappearance of her father as having produced a character whose inclination for self-protection made her instinctively rightwing, and who was "more than anything a survivor, always on the lookout for opportunities to move forward through life".

Chanel had a relationship with the Nazi officer Hans Günther von Dincklage, which she leveraged to free her nephew, André Palasse, from a German prisoner of war camp. "We did not want to ignore her wartime record – but first and foremost, this is a fashion exhibition," said Cullen.

Fragile evening pieces usually stored in the museum's archive will be on display, along with the "evening trousers" with which a young Chanel scandalised French society. One room will tell the story of Chanel's No 5 perfume.

Many of the 100 pieces added to the show since the Paris version delve into her connections with Britain. A portrait in oils of Chanel, painted by Winston Churchill, attests to a close relationship with British society forged through her romance with the Duke of Westminster.

The show also highlights her connection to British manufacturing. On display will be a tomato-red evening gown in silk velvet, with matching elbow-length gloves, made for Chanel by the Manchester Velvet company in 1932. During that decade, Coco established a company – British Chanel Ltd – for the manufacture of her designs in British fabrics including Northern Irish linens and Nottingham lace.

"Chanel was highly exacting, so the connection attests to the existence of a high-quality textile industry in Britain, which sadly no longer exists," says Cullen.



▲ *One room tells the story of the No 5 perfume, worn by Marilyn Monroe*



▲ *There will be more than 50 of Chanel's famous tweed suits on display in the V&A show, including a bubblegum-pink set belonging to the American actor Lauren Bacall* PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL SCHUTZER/THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION/SHUTTERSTOCK

Flintoff seen for first time since horror Top Gear crash last year

Nadeem Badshah

Former England cricketer Andrew Flintoff has been pictured for the first time since he was injured in an accident at the Top Gear test track last year that saw him airlifted to hospital.

The 45-year-old, who had visible scars on his face and tape on his nose, was seen with the England team during their one-day international against New Zealand in Cardiff yesterday.

The former all-rounder led fielding drills with the England players at the Sophia Gardens ground and he was spotted on the England balcony during the New Zealand innings, with the tourists winning by eight wickets.

Flintoff sustained facial injuries and broken ribs after his open-top three-wheel Morgan Super 3 car flipped and slid along the track when he was driving at high speed in December.

The incident took place at the BBC programme's track at Dunsfold Park aerodrome in Surrey.

In March, the BBC said it would not resume filming the 34th series of Top Gear because of the crash.

The broadcaster said there would be a health and safety review on the motoring show, which has been running in its current iteration for 21 years. The BBC added it had apologised to Flintoff, and the accident had affected the team who produce the show.

Flintoff had already had one high-speed crash while filming the programme. In 2019 he crashed at 125mph while travelling in a three-wheeled cycle car but managed to walk away from the scene.

In 2006, then Top Gear co-presenter Richard Hammond suffered serious head injuries and spent two weeks in a coma after a crash while filming at the former RAF Elvington airbase near York. He recovered and returned to the show in 2007.

England captain Jos Buttler said it was "great" to have Flintoff around the squad. Buttler said: "He's obviously an England legend, and it's just nice to have him around the group. A few of the lads can pick his brains a little bit and he's settled in really well. It's great to have him with us."

Flintoff retired from cricket in 2010 after playing 79 Tests, 141 one-day internationals and seven T20s for England.



▲ *The former cricketer had visible scars on his face and tape on his nose*

Councils 'face paying billions in compensation' over equal pay

Jessica Murray
Midlands correspondent

Councils in the UK are facing compensation bills running into billions of pounds over equal pay claims, campaigners are warning, as they call on the government to intervene.

The GMB union is supporting more than 3,000 equal pay claims against Birmingham city council, and has continuing disputes against councils in Coventry, Westmorland, Cumberland, Glasgow, Dundee and Fife.

It is gathering evidence in at least 20 other councils, and said "everywhere we are looking, we are finding issues".

"It is not for other councils to think that Birmingham is the exception," said Rhea Wolfson, a GMB organiser. "Birmingham has been exceptionally bad in how they've handled equal pay in the past, but other councils need to be learning the lessons and learning them urgently. There are bad practices everywhere.

"This problem is huge and there needs to be a conversation with central government about how they're going to deal with it, because leaving it up to local authorities is not a sustainable answer. This is going to cost billions, many billions."

It is not only councils that are affected, with 20,000 GMB members currently suing Asda for equal pay. Asda is defending the claim.

Wolfson suggested a strike could be on the cards in Birmingham if negotiations developed in a similar way to those in a long-running equal pay dispute in Glasgow.

About 8,000 women working in homecare, schools and nurseries, and cleaning and catering services in the city went on strike before the council agreed to pay out £770m in compensation. It sold council assets, including Glasgow's Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, to fund it.

"Birmingham have not paid out any of this money yet," said Wolfson. "They continue to withhold these wages from women workers – they are still sitting on the £750m that allegedly may bankrupt them, and it's women workers that are being robbed every single minute of every single day that they go to their work.

The city council said its current estimated equal pay liability was between £650m and £760m, although council correspondence with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities suggested it may be as much as £1.15bn. It was a key reason why the council was forced to issue a 114 notice this week, in effect declaring itself bankrupt.

The problem dates back to the 2000s when a number of equal pay claims were lodged against the council, including a case involving 4,000 female Birmingham city council workers across 49 roles who argued they were excluded from bonuses paid to those in traditionally male-dominated jobs such as refuse collectors and road workers.

Then, in 2012, more than 170 former council employees, including cooks, cleaners and catering and care staff, won an equal pay compensation fight that had gone all the way to the supreme court. The result was that women could have their equal pay claims heard in the county court, where there is a six-year deadline from when employment ceased, as opposed to an employment tribunal, where the deadline is six months.

Over the next decade the city council paid out more than £1.1bn in equal pay compensation, but trade unions argued they failed to adequately implement a job evaluation scheme that would have rooted out the source of the inequality.

As a result, trade unions claim, more equal pay claims have surfaced, and the council leader, John Cotton, said on Tuesday that plans to create a new job evaluation scheme were submitted only last week. The council aims to close off all new equal pay claims by April 2025.

Stefan Cross KC, a leading figure in the original battles for equal pay in Birmingham, including the 2010 tribunal hailed as a "major victory", said the situation there had had such a severe impact because the city council had "denied the problem", where other councils had tried to manage the situation.

Birmingham city council said a judge-led inquiry would be commissioned to determine the causes of how its equal pay liability had continued to grow since 2012 and who was accountable.





◀ *The tower blocks at the centre of an investment fiasco that led to the council's £1.8bn debt rise over Woking. Far left: Chigz Hirani, who, like many in the town, wants answers as to where the money has gone*

PHOTOGRAPHS: SOPHIA EVANS; MARTIN GODWIN/ THE GUARDIAN

'It's so sad' Woking counts the cost of Tory gambles as facilities face axe

Richard Partington
Economics correspondent

The council's ambitious plan was for Woking's tall buildings to be seen, on a clear day, from the viewing levels of the Shard in central London. Residents, however, view the unfinished towers with much less pride – as a symbol of the Surrey town's financial woes.

Woking borough council this week announced a sweeping package of cuts to local services, after the local authority in effect declared itself bankrupt this summer, revealing a £1.2bn deficit racked up from a risky investment spree overseen by its former Conservative administration. The towers were at the centre of the problem, with cost overruns adding to vast debts.

"I don't know where to start. It's all gone sideways," says Chigz Hirani, the owner of the Hair Lab hairdressers, a stone's throw from the towers. "Where has the money gone? It started off as being a couple of hundred million, but a billion pounds? It's got to have gone somewhere."

Like many in the town, Hirani is angry and wants answers. "Something dodgy has gone on," he says. "They've got no money left but they'll have to find it from somewhere. It'll come from us, in taxes."

Woking is among growing numbers of English councils in financial distress, with Birmingham the latest this week to declare it was in effect bankrupt. The country's largest local authority joined Thurrock, Slough, Croydon and Northamptonshire among recent high-profile blow-ups.

With debts of £1.8bn after its failed investment spree, Woking is looking to make cost savings of £8.5m a year in a vain effort to balance the books. Earmarked for the chop include the town's Pool in the Park swimming pool, council funding for the arts, playgrounds, and community care schemes – affecting the young, the old and the most vulnerable. All 12 of the public toilets will be removed, and 13 sports pavilions will have funding scrapped.

Residents are particularly angry about losing the pool, a prized community hub. It's a decision the council isn't taking lightly after a consultation over the cuts showed it ranked among the top three most used services. The plans are for a phased closure over three years. However, it is also a costly asset, with a £1.8m bill last year.

Ian Johnson just renewed his over-65s annual membership, and is worried. "It's so sad. It keeps me active," he says. He blames the council. "They promised the towers and sold a good story. But there has been so much mismanagement."

The council hopes to keep several of its facilities running by transferring them to charities and volunteers. Some community groups remain hopeful they can keep going without direct support, while others fear they may close.

At the Lightbox art gallery, its director, Sarah Brown, is concerned the loss of all funding could force it to close. Liz White is drawing pictures of sculptures on display in the gallery by Sophie Ryder, in the last days of an exhibition at the award-winning facility.



▲ *'How can cuts be the answer?' Liz White at a drawing class at Lightbox*

"We're worried about what's going on," White says. "How can cuts be the right answer? You need to get people into the town. There has to be more than just shops."

Most locals blame Woking's problems on the Tories, who had controlled or led the council for the decade up to May 2022, when the Lib Dems ousted them.

But Woking has also struggled with austerity imposed on councils from Westminster by the former chancellor George Osborne.

Richard Price, out shopping in the town centre for a weekend camping trip with his family, feels let down by the Tories, who he voted for. "Someone needs to carry the can," he says. "Whoever made all of the unwise decisions, they need to be held accountable for the actions they've taken."

Cooking genes
Buddy Oliver follows in chef dad's footsteps
Page 9



'Narrowing window'
UN warns world will miss climate targets
Page 18



▲ *Maddy Lawrence, 20, dislocated her hip while playing rugby and later died in hospital from sepsis*
PHOTOGRAPH: LAWRENCE FAMILY/PA MEDIA

Student who died from sepsis was victim of a 'lack of care'

Steven Morris

The family of a student who died after hospital staff missed that she had developed sepsis despite a string of warning signs yesterday claimed she was the victim of a "lack of care", as a coroner ruled there had been "gross" failures in her treatment.

Staff at Southmead hospital in Bristol failed to carry out the sepsis screening and observations needed to keep Maddy Lawrence safe after she was taken to hospital with a dislocated hip sustained in a rugby tackle.

Outside court her mother, Karen Lawrence, said: "It has been a constant struggle to understand how a healthy, strong and fit 20-year-old could lose her life to sepsis which was allowed to develop under the care of professionals.

"Her screams of pain and our pleas for help were merely managed, temporarily quietened with painkillers, while the infection progressed unnoticed by hospital staff.

"Our daughter was failed by a number of nurses and medical staff; symptoms were ignored, observations were not taken, on one occasion for 16 hours. There was no curiosity, basic tests were not completed even when hospital policy required them.

"Maddy herself expressed concern on multiple occasions, but her pain was not being taken seriously. As well as failing to fulfil their duty, those nurses and medical staff offered no sympathy, no compassion and little attention.

"This failure meant Maddy was not given the chance to beat sepsis. Significant delays in its discovery meant the crucial window for treatment was missed. Maddy did not die due to understaffing or a lack of money. Her death was the result of a lack of care."

Dr Peter Harrowing, the coroner, said there had been "gross" failures in her care. "Madeleine Lawrence died of a rare complication of an infection," he said. "In hospital her deterioration was not recognised and necessary life-saving treatment was not commenced promptly."

In the record of inquest, Harrowing said her death was "contributed to by neglect".

The coroner's conclusions come as ministers consider introducing "Martha's rule" in England to make it easier for patients and their families who believe their concerns are not being taken seriously by staff to get a second medical opinion.

Martha Mills died aged 13 after developing sepsis while under the care of King's College hospital NHS foundation trust in London and a coroner ruled she would most probably have survived if doctors had identified the warning signs and transferred her to intensive care earlier.

Karen Lawrence praised the work of staff in the intensive care unit when her daughter was finally taken there. "Our heartfelt thanks go to the ICU nurses who in the darkest of days found time to sit, to plait her hair and hold her hand and learn about familiar happy tales," she said.

Lawrence sustained a dislocated hip when she was tackled during a game for UWE Bristol on 9 March 2022. She lay in agony on the pitch for more than five hours while she waited for an ambulance.

> ***'This failure meant Maddy was not given the chance to beat sepsis'***
>
> **Karen Lawrence**
> *Maddy's mother*

Simon Lawrence said his daughter was clearly unwell over the next few days, screaming out in pain and at times hallucinating.

She declined rapidly, had a number of operations, including one to amputate one of her legs.

On 25 March, family members were at her side when her respirator was switched off and, in her father's words, she "faded away".

The inquest was told medical staff did not at first test her for sepsis and carry out regular observations, although her national early warning score indicated this should have been done.

North Bristol NHS trust's chief medical officer, Tim Whittlestone, apologised to Lawrence's family. He said: "Despite the rarity of Maddy's condition and the heroic efforts of many of our clinical teams, we acknowledge and apologise for the omissions in her care. We will reflect carefully on the findings."

Harrowing said the delay in getting Lawrence to hospital had not contributed to her death and said the player who had tackled Lawrence should not reproach herself.

Call for families to be given a second opinion *Page 21* →

Network Rail fined £6.7m after three people died in train crash

Gwyn Topham
Transport correspondent

Network Rail has been fined £6.7m at the high court in Aberdeen after admitting health and safety failings over a rail crash that claimed three people's lives.

The train driver, Brett McCullough, 45, the conductor Donald Dinnie, 58, and a passenger, Christopher Stuchbury, 62, died in the derailment near Stonehaven, Aberdeenshire, on 12 August 2020.

The crash, the worst accident on Britain's railways in 18 years, came after debris had washed on to the track from a wrongly built drainage system after heavy rain. Despite the conditions, the driver was not warned to reduce his speed.

Network Rail's fine was reduced from £10m because the firm admitted culpability on Thursday. It admitted a series of failings that resulted in the deaths, pleading guilty to a charge covering the period from 1 May 2011 to 12 August 2020.

These included failing to inform the driver that it was unsafe to drive the train at a speed of 75mph or caution him to reduce his speed on the day of the derailment. There were also failings in construction, inspection and maintenance of drainage assets and in adverse and extreme weather planning.

Prosecutors told the court that Network Rail failed to maintain or inspect the drain, which was built in 2011 by contractors from the bankrupted firm Carillion, in the years before the derailment. Had the drain been properly constructed, it would have been able to cope with the gravel washed down by the heavy rain.

Although McCullough pulled the emergency brake before hitting the gravel, there was insufficient time for it to have any impact on the train's speed, the court heard.

Trish Ewen, 59, the partner of the train conductor, said his death was "incomprehensible", adding: "Donald and I should be thinking about retiring together and planning the rest of our lives – instead he was taken and I've been left to exist alone."

Network Rail said it would build upon the "significant changes" it had made since the incident, which it said had "helped us to manage the risk of severe weather to the network". About £1.6bn of its budget for the next four years is dedicated to improving the resilience of the railway, after rail bosses in Scotland and elsewhere warned that the climate crisis posed an increasing threat to infrastructure.

National
Prisons







Police investigate first sighting of escaped terror suspect as search enters third day

Haroon Siddique
Dan Sabbagh

Police are investigating the first reported sighting of the escaped terrorism suspect Daniel Abed Khalife and offering a £20,000 reward for any information that might lead to his arrest.

As the search for Khalife threatened to extend into a fourth day, the reported sighting offered a glimmer of light for officers still struggling for a breakthrough after a search of Richmond Park in south-west London failed to yield results.

Khalife was reportedly seen walking away from a Bidfood lorry that had stopped near Wandsworth roundabout and walking towards Wandsworth town centre shortly after his escape from Wandsworth prison on Wednesday morning.

The Metropolitan police's counter-terrorism commander, Dominic Murphy, said the sighting "could be very significant". He said: "This remains a fast-paced and dynamic investigation, but I want the public to know that a large number of officers are working extremely hard to locate Khalife.

"We have now received more than 100 calls from the public, and we thank everyone who has contacted us with information. The sighting near Wandsworth roundabout could be very significant, and this is one of many useful lines of inquiry that officers are perusing," he said.

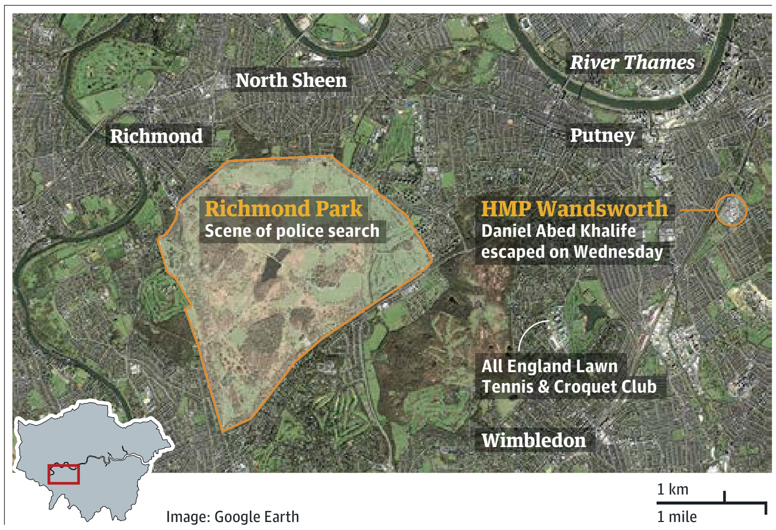
He added: "My message to him is to hand yourself in. Either call us or go to a local police station and hand yourself in.

"With the reward we are offering today and the amazing support we have had from the public and the media, we will be closing in on you."

More than 150 Met counter-terrorism officers and staff are continuing the search for Khalife, with support from colleagues across the Met and in other forces.



▲ *The Met chief Mark Rowley said Khalife may have had help inside*



Murphy said the focus of the search remained in London. As recriminations over the escape continued, many experts echoed Murphy's comments of the previous day when he suggested Khalife's skillset developed in the army would make him a more elusive target.

The escaper would have completed a level one Sere (survive, evade, resist, extract) training, a 16-hour course that ends with a practical exercise, British army sources said yesterday.

At their highest level Sere courses are designed to help special forces soldiers or shot-down pilots survive behind enemy lines, but at the most basic level they teach soldiers greater resilience in the field.

After completing basic training at Pirbright in Surrey, Khalife served in 22 Signal Regiment, which provides communications for Nato's Allied Rapid Reaction Corps, a 300-strong multinational command based in Gloucestershire.

A spokesperson for the British army said that even as a signaller Khalife would have been "trained to shoot, navigate, communicate, and to be fit, robust and have some basic medical skills" – although some veterans said that much of the training was basic-level.

On Thursday, counter-terror police emphasised that Khalife, while not thought to be a danger to the public, was "a trained soldier" and that the UK had "some of the best military in the world", as they sought to hunt him down.

Although the army has already dismissed Khalife, who faces terrorism and espionage charges, including planting a fake bomb at his Staffordshire barracks in early January, the praise of forces' training has been



▲ *The type of chef's clothing and footwear that Khalife was wearing*



◀ *Far left, a still from CCTV footage of the lorry that Khalife is believed to have escaped under; left, a spoof wanted sign outside HM Prison Wandsworth*
MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: MET POLICE



▲ *A police search of Richmond Park, in south-west London, failed to reveal clues to Khalife's whereabouts*
PHOTOGRAPH: PETER MACDIARMID/LNP

quietly well received in some military circles.

Maj Michael Shearer, a retired military officer, told Sky News: "Soldiers know how to handle these type [of] pressures. The state of mind that soldiers have … [there] is constantly a part of their being that is thinking: 'How will I deal with that?'"

Police continued to advise yesterday that Khalife does not pose a threat to the wider public but said anyone who sees him should not approach him and instead call 999 immediately. They also urged people to submit relevant material, whether from CCTV, doorbell footage, mobile phone or dashcam footage to their UK Image Appeal website.

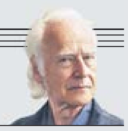
The Scotland Yard chief, Sir Mark Rowley, said officers were investigating the possibility Khalife had help from within Wandsworth prison to carry out his "clearly pre-planned" getaway. The 21-year-old is believed to have slipped out of the prison where he was working and strapped himself to the bottom of a Bidfood delivery lorry.

The mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, joined the chorus of voices highlighting the possible contribution to the escape conditions at Wandsworth, saying there were questions about the "link between government austerity and this man escaping" from the "overcrowded" Victorian prison with insufficient staff. Official Ministry of Justice figures published yesterday showed that on 25 August there were 1,617 prisoners in Wandsworth - 667 more than it was designed for.

Greatest escapes

Up over the wall, under a van, or in helicopters

Duncan Campbell



It is nearly 60 years since, as the Guardian reported at the time, "the 30-year prison sentence which Ronald Arthur Biggs, one of the Great Train Robbers, began 15 months ago was abruptly placed in suspense yesterday afternoon when he was allowed out to exercise in the yard of Wandsworth prison, London.

"With three other prisoners he disappeared over the 20ft high wall while his guards, obstructed by men still on exercise, watched helplessly."

The reporter, Tony Geraghty, added that like the train robbery itself "this operation was characterised by panache and flamboyance".

While this week's reports were less likely to suggest that "panache and flamboyance" were involved in the departure of Daniel Khalife from the same institution, it will certainly go down as a remarkable prison escape.

Biggs managed to stay on the run for almost 36 years before returning to London from his hideaway in Brazil in 2001, serving out the remains of his sentence and dying in 2013.

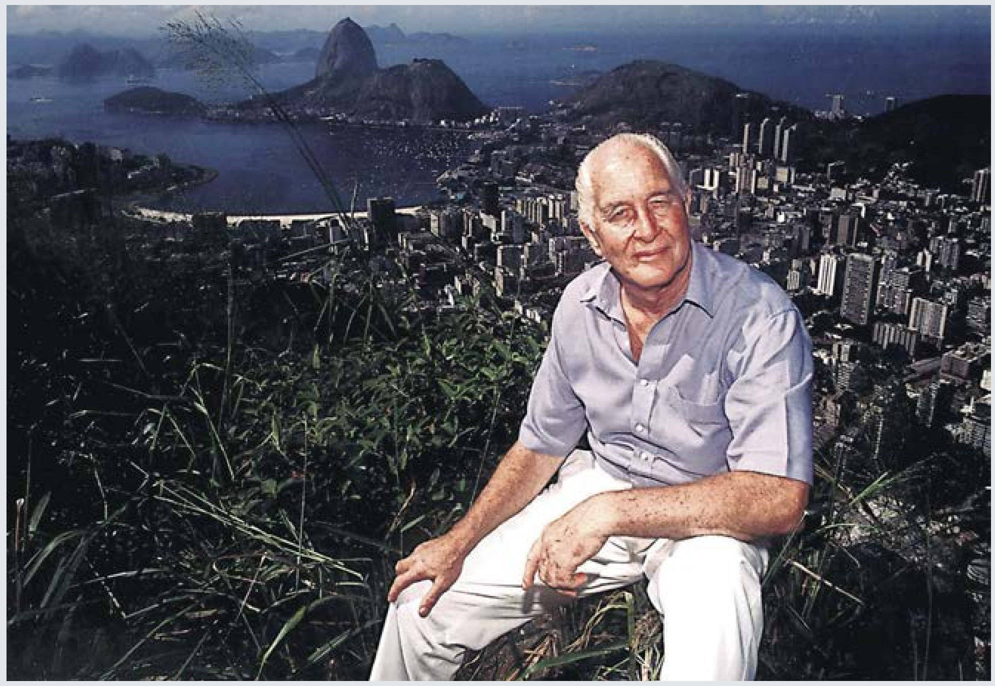
Incidentally, it was Wandsworth prison - "the hate factory", as it was always known to inmates - where Biggs first met his fellow train robber Bruce Reynolds in the 1950s.

Remarkably, the pair helped a fellow prisoner, Ted Blair, escape then in exactly the same way as Khalife this week.

In those days one prison job was chopping up kindling for government offices and packing it into delivery vans.

As Reynolds described it in his memoir, The Autobiography of a Thief, Blair "clung to the underparts of the van and dropped off directly outside the Home Office. It was a nice touch.

"Of course, he was nicked within a few days, lying asleep at home, but Ted didn't care. In spite of the



◀ *The Great Train Robber Ronnie Biggs, pictured in 1993 in Brazil, where he lived for more than 30 years after scaling a 20ft wall and escaping from Wandsworth prison in 1965*
PHOTOGRAPH: PROFILE PRESS/REX FEATURES

belting he received on his return to Wandsworth, he had done his thing and beaten the system. It was a victory for all of us."

Reynolds' son, Nick, has just authored an audiobook, Fugitive! On the Run with Britain's Most Wanted, which recounts his and others' experiences of living in hiding, which he says is, in the end, the real test of escaping.

He described Khalife's escape as "audacious, given the nature of the charges faced" but the real test, he reckoned, would be how long Khalife manages to stay at large.

Probably the most prolific British escaper was Walter "Angel Face" Probyn, who got out of prison no fewer than 15 times in the 1950s and 60s, winning himself the nickname of the "Hoxton Houdini".

He once told me: "You don't need a lot of patience to plan an escape, because you've got nothing

> *'[Planning an escape from jail] is a labour of love, something you really enjoy'*
>
> **Walter Probyn**
> *Serial prison escapee*



▲ *The former armed robber John McVicar absconded from jail in 1968*

else to do. It's a labour of love, something you really enjoy doing. It's like a hobby."

With the late armed robber John McVicar, he escaped from Durham prison, as featured in the 1980 film McVicar.

Why are such escapes so rare? Paul Buck, in his book The E-list: Notorious Prison Escapes, quoted Alfie Hinds, who escaped from high-security prisons three times in the 1950s: "The vast majority of prisoners are resigned, if not content, to do their bird.

"Some will escape if the chance is handed to them on a plate but all they want is a brief taste of freedom; for instance, the chance to spend a few days with their wife or girlfriend." Some, like Probyn, did it for the sheer hell of it.

The prewar jewellery thief, cat burglar and smash-and-grab robber Ruby Sparks, when he escaped from Strangeways, even left a poem in his cell: "The cage is empty/ The bird has flown/ I've gone to a place/ Where I'm better known."

One momentous escape was that of George Blake, who was serving 42 years for spying for the Soviet Union, but who made it out of Wormwood Scrubs in 1966.

He was helped by two peace activists, Mike Randall and Pat Pottle, who believed his sentence was excessive. Blake made it all the way to Moscow, where he died in 2020. Randall and Pottle were acquitted of aiding the escape by an Old Bailey jury in 1991.

While most escapes tend to be "up or under" - up over the wall or under a vehicle - there was a famous aerial escape in 1987.

John Kendall and Sydney Draper fled Gartree prison in a hijacked helicopter. Kendall was caught 10 days later but Draper stayed on the run for more than a year.

Over the years escapes have become much rarer. In 2012, John Massey, a sprightly 64-year-old, understandably attracted a lot of attention when he climbed over the wall of Pentonville prison because he wanted to visit his ailing mother; he was recaptured within two days.

Scotland has its own tales of famous breakouts. Johnny Ramensky, a safe-blower who was released from prison during the second world war to use his skills against the Nazis, was the first man to escape from Peterhead prison, an event recalled by the singer Josh MacRae in the Roddy McMillan song Let Ramensky Go, which noted that the prison was a fortress and its walls were "thick and stout … But it couldnae hold wee Johnny when he felt like walking out".

The latest escape seems unlikely to be recalled in a folk song.



PHOTOGRAPH: EVENING STANDARD/HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

▲ *Career criminal Walter Probyn, seen in the back seat of a car in 1958, spent 30 of his first 44 years behind bars but managed to escape 15 times*

Duncan Campbell *is a freelance writer who worked for the Guardian as crime correspondent and Los Angeles correspondent*

GPs ignoring cancer symptoms in young people, expert warns

Rachel Hall

GPs are ignoring cancer warning signs in young people, with too many referred for psychological therapy instead of screening, a leading oncology expert has warned.

The symptoms of young people repeatedly presenting with pain are too often ignored because there is still a lack of awareness among patients and GPs of how early onset cancer has increased, according to Dr Bhawna Sirohi, the president of oncology at the Royal Medical Society. This means that when symptoms are finally picked up, cases are more likely to be terminal, she added.

The latest research suggests that the number of under-50s worldwide being diagnosed with cancer has risen by nearly 80% over three decades to reach 3.26 million in 2019.

"It's like the black sheep – one has to think about cancer as a differential every time a patient comes," said Sirohi, adding that GPs were "doing a great job" but needed to be supported by robust NHS data and stronger guidance.

She said that in her breast cancer clinic a lot of patients had been referred for psychological counselling because they kept going back to their GP, but then six months later were diagnosed with breast cancer. "She keeps coming back with pain, a niggle, and they say: 'Oh no, it's nothing to worry about, it's pre-period, everybody has pain, don't worry.'"

Sirohi said she had observed the increase in younger people presenting with cancer first-hand. "I've seen 25-year-olds and 28-year-olds in Bart's health [NHS trust] with breast cancer. I'm seeing people in their 20s and 30s. We never saw that 20, 15 years ago – maybe one every two to three months, but now in every clinic you see quite a few people. In a month you might see 10-15 or maybe more."

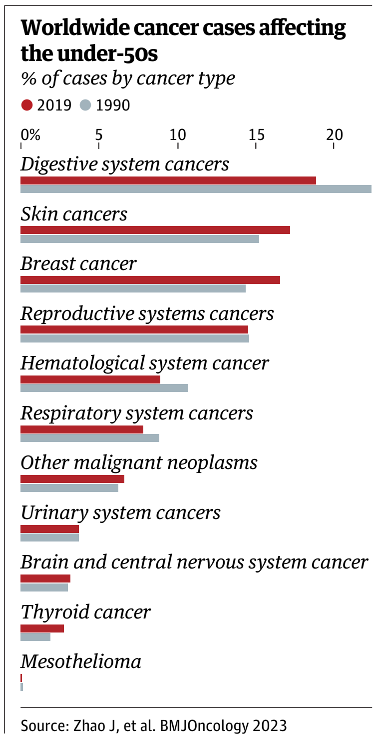
Noting that young people are more likely to present in the later stages of cancer, when it is harder to treat, Sirohi said it was important to have a discussion about lowering the age for screenings in cancers. This would follow the US, where the American Cancer Society recently recommended lowering the screening age for breast cancer to 40, and for colorectal cancer to 45. The equivalent ages are 50 and 60 in the UK.

Sirohi said: "Decreasing the screening age has a huge implication for countries with universal health coverage, like the UK. It has additional cost, additional tests, additional workload on the NHS, which is already overloaded."

But, she added, it was important that research into its cost-effectiveness was undertaken, and that if it could save a significant number of young lives "it has be done".

Sirohi said there were specific factors affecting young people, for example the impact of convalescence on their working lives, the effect on their mental health, how treatment affected fertility and the need for genetic testing, which may warrant the creation of specialist clinics.

Research into the demographic breakdown of early onset cancer is



also required, since it is known that people from some black, Asian and ethnic minority communities present with later-stage cancer as they are more likely to dismiss symptoms. Research in the US has shown that 23% of early onset cancer cases were in African Americans.

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly what the causes of early onset cancer are given the sheer number of carcinogens, said Dean Jones, a professor at the Emory Winship Cancer Institute leading a team shortlisted for Cancer Grand Challenges funding from Cancer Research UK. As well as lifestyle factors, researchers are considering whether higher temperatures and resultant dehydration; the use and misuse of antibiotics; and industrial pollution, including poor disposal of electronic waste, could contribute.

He said that there was evidence that exposure to carcinogens in many cases had "occurred decades before the onset of the cancer" – including in the womb – meaning that research should look at how damage could be reversed rather than just prevented.

Prof Arthur Sun Myint, the lead clinician at Clatterbridge Cancer Centre and vice-president of the International Contact Radiotherapy Network, said there was a need to develop cheaper, faster early screening methods.

A Department of Health and Social Care spokesperson said: "NHS England is supporting GPs to diagnose more cancers early by making funding available for tools to help with clinical decision making, such as whether to refer or request further investigation in patients where they believe there's a cancer risk and identifying at-risk patients based on their symptoms."

Under-50s What the research tells us about rise in disease

Andrew Gregory
Health editor

A global study published in BMJ Oncology this week reported a surge in the number of people under the age of 50 being diagnosed with cancer. Here are six things everyone needs to know:

Is cancer actually rising in the under-50s?
Yes. The latest study reports that global cases of early onset cancer, defined as cases in those aged 14 to 49, increased by 79% from 1.82 million in 1990 to 3.26 million in 2019, according to a study led by the University of Edinburgh in Scotland and Zhejiang University school of medicine in Hangzhou, China.

Even with population growth – the world population increased by 46% during this period – experts agree cancer in the under-50s is becoming more common. A similar study led by Harvard University in 2022 found early onset cases were rising rapidly in 14 types of cancers.

So does the rise in cases mean more people under the age of 50 are dying from cancer?
No, actually it doesn't. Cancer now kills 1 million under-50s a year. The latest study reported a 27.7% rise in deaths since 1990 – but with a larger population rise, this suggests a falling death rate.

"The increase in numbers of cancer deaths in this age group was notably lower than for diagnoses, namely 28%, which is below the increases in total population and case numbers, indicating a fall in the average cancer death rate in this group," said Prof Dorothy Bennett, of St George's, University of London.

What are the fastest-growing types of cancer in younger people?
Cancers of the windpipe (nasopharynx) and prostate have risen the fastest since 1990, according to the latest study, which looked at data for 29 cancers in the under-50s from 204 countries. Breast cancer is the most common type in women, while tracheal, bronchus and lung cancer has the greatest disease burden in men.

What are the main types of cancers affecting the under-50s?
The Edinburgh study found that almost one in five – 18.83% – of the 3.26 million cases in 2019 were digestive system cancers. That is interesting because in the Harvard study, of the 14 cancer types increasing in the under-50s, eight related to the digestive system.

The second largest group was skin cancers (17.16%), according to the Edinburgh study, followed by breast cancer (16.50%).

So why are cases of cancer rising in the under-50s?
That is the million-dollar question – and one experts don't have the definitive answer to yet.

The researchers behind the latest study said they were concerned poor diets and lifestyle may be partly to blame.

Several factors were linked to early onset cancers, they suggested, including excess weight, diets high in red meat and salt, low intake of fruit, physical inactivity, smoking and alcohol use. Genetic factors may also be playing a role.

The Harvard University study drew similar conclusions. "The increased consumption of highly processed or westernised foods together with changes in lifestyles, the environment, morbidities and other factors might all have contributed to such changes in exposures."

How worried should I be?
About nine in 10 cancers still occur in people over 50. Increasing age remains a major non-modifiable risk factor for cancer. Therefore, if you are in your 20s, 30s or 40s, it's important to know that early onset cancer is still uncommon.

However, the uptick in cases among younger adults should still prompt action, experts say. "It is important to educate both the public and healthcare professionals regarding the possibility of certain cancers in younger adults to allow earlier diagnosis, which in turn improves outcomes," said Ashleigh Hamilton and Helen Coleman, of Queen's University Belfast.

"Prevention and early detection measures are urgently required, along with identifying optimal treatment strategies for early onset cancers, which should include a holistic approach addressing the unique supportive care needs of younger patients."



▲ *Experts say early detection of cancers, helped by MRI scanners, improves patient outcomes*
PHOTOGRAPH: MONTY RAKUSEN/GETTY IMAGES

▼ *'He's got his dad's charisma': Buddy Oliver, 12, who already has a YouTube channel, with Jamie*
PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL STUART



Family dinners

Young Oliver is latest in line of cooks with famous parents to star in own TV show

Esther Addley

Buddy is a 12-year-old schoolboy from Essex, with a large family and a shock of blond hair. He also happens to have an extremely famous father: the TV chef Jamie Oliver. Perhaps not coincidentally, this week Buddy acquired a commission for a TV series of his own. In a programme for the BBC, it was reported, Buddy will teach other children recipes and helpful tips. Dad may be one of the country's most famous and influential chefs, but in this case, a source told the Sun, "Buddy is the star of the show."

His surname, of course, will have been a factor - and Buddy is far from the first son or daughter of a TV chef to venture into the worlds of cookery or presenting. Jack Stein, the son of Rick, is the chef director overseeing menus at his father's eponymous restaurant group, and has presented cookery shows on SBS and UKTV Food.

Emily Roux, the daughter of the former Masterchef presenter Michel Roux and the granddaughter of Albert Roux, spent some of her own chef career working at the family's restaurant, Le Gavroche. Luciano Pierre White and Sam Worrall Thompson, the sons of Marco and Anthony respectively, are both chefs.

Perhaps closest to Buddy's experience is that of Gordon Ramsay's daughter Tilly, who like him grew up on the fringe of her father's celebrity. In 2015, she was given her own CBBC TV show, Matilda and the Ramsay Bunch, in which the then 13-year-old Tilly cooked meals for her large and noisy family at their Los Angeles home and elsewhere.

If some "nepo baby" accusations are inevitable, and a family leg-up no doubt offers a significant boost, sustained success in the competitive and volatile restaurant world is near impossible without talent and hard work too (Jack Stein, for instance, was voted best chef at the 2023 Food Magazine reader awards).

And Buddy is no newcomer either to cookery or TV, having a great deal more presenting experience than Jamie did when he burst on to British TV in 1999, aged 23. Like all his siblings, Buddy has been cooking with his parents (and appearing in videos) since he was a toddler, helping his mum, Jools, rustle up "a really cool super-smoothie" or rolling out some pasta with his dad.

Since 2020 he's been fronting videos himself, at first hosted on Jamie's social media channel. Cooking Buddies, his own YouTube channel, now has 133,000 subscribers. It's that, just as much as his famous name, that is likely to have enhanced Buddy's appeal to TV commissioners, notes Vanessa Hartley, the head of social at Tribal Worldwide, a branding and social media agency. "To me, [those social media numbers] essentially represent a baseline viewership at launch. So the BBC are going into this knowing that there is already interest - it's almost as if a pilot had been done for them already."



▲ *Jools and Jamie Oliver with their daughter and baby Buddy in 2010*

One one key point, the family connection is extremely important, says Hartley. "Personally I think the interesting bit of this is actually Jamie's following, [because] I'm pretty certain that Jamie Oliver posting about the show on his own channels will be tied into [the broadcaster's] contract." That kind of money-can't-buy endorsement to the chef's many millions of followers would be any broadcaster's dream, she says.

None of which should detract from Buddy's natural talent. Confident and charming, he's definitely a chip off the old block, says Cathy Harding, the founder of Cook Stars, which provides cookery lessons in schools, for councils and privately across the UK.

"He's got his dad's charisma," she says, "and I especially love that they actually let him be a child - they leave in the little mistakes that he makes. I find that really endearing - because that's exactly how it is in our classes - it's certainly never perfect."

Having a young cook on TV to inspire other kids will be "brilliant", agrees Helen Gubbins, a mother of two from Edinburgh who started a blog, cookingwithmykids.co.uk, sharing recipes she uses with her own children at home.

"Having someone their own age can really inspire other children to give it a go," she says. "They can relate to it so much more than if a grownup's making it."

For home cooks or wildly famous ones, "sometimes it's important that you take a step back and let them just get on and do it", says Gubbins. "Something might not turn out perfect, but if it's homemade food, it's always going to taste pretty good. And they get a lot of satisfaction too."

New restaurant to open on site of Le Caprice, haunt of A-list stars and royals

Sammy Gecsoyler

It was once a haunt of the fabulously rich and the unquestionably famous: Princess Diana and Princess Margaret were regular diners; Mick Jagger and Liz Taylor, too. Now the London building that housed Le Caprice restaurant seems set to open its doors again, three years after it closed.

Jeremy King, the restaurateur behind the Wolseley and the Delaunay, this week said he had taken over the lease for 20 Arlington Street, the former home of his first restaurant.

King is reuniting with Jesus Adorno, the maître d', who remained at the site after it was taken over by Richard Caring in 2005. King started at Le Caprice in 1981 with his business partner, Chris Corbin. Royals aside, Liz Hurley, Omar Sharif and Madonna were also spotted there.

Harry Murray, the president of the Hospitality Professionals Association, first visited Le Caprice in 1982. He said he was "absolutely delighted" about the site's reopening and Adorno's involvement. "Jesus's total heart was in Le Caprice. He made you feel so important. You knew that you were surrounded by people getting exactly the same treatment, whether it be a politician or a film star," he said.

Last year, Corbin & King, the fine dining group founded by the pair behind Le Caprice, went into administration after trade was devastated by the pandemic. King intended to buy back the business but Minor International, owned by the American-born Thai billionaire William Heinecke, which had held a majority stake, paid more than £60m in an auction and ousted King and Corbin.

Jay Rayner, the Observer's restaurant critic, said: "King made it absolutely clear right from the moment he lost control of the original group that this was not the end for him. It's not a surprise to any of us that we've had this sudden flurry of announcements, but it is a delight because he's very, very good at it."

Le Caprice closed in 2020 after its lease ended but plans were announced to open it at another location. While King has acquired 20 Arlington Street, it is unlikely he will be able to use the Le Caprice name. Its reputation as an A-lister's restaurant of choice may also be hard to replicate. "The world has moved on hugely since 1981 and Jeremy King will know that," said Rayner.

"When the original Le Caprice opened, there wasn't vast amounts of competition but now there is. It's going to be impossible for it to be the landmark that it once was but I have absolutely no doubt that it's in the hands of a very skilled restaurateur and will be somewhere that people will talk about."

Apple shares fall as China slaps more workers with iPhone ban

Helen Davidson
Hibaq Farah
Dan Milmo

China's government has reportedly expanded its ban of iPhones to local government workers and state-owned companies, a day after it emerged central government employees were forbidden from bringing the devices to work.

Several agencies had begun instructing employees not to bring Apple products to work and the ban was expected to be further extended, Bloomberg reported.

Nikkei reported at least one state-owned company had told its employees that anyone working with trade secrets could not bring their iPhones, Apple Watches or AirPods into work from next month.

The ban is believed to be a sign of Beijing pushing back on its reliance on US tech. China has more than 150,000 state-owned companies, according to state media, employing more than 56 million people in 2021.

China's central government has imposed some restrictions on the use of foreign-made tech in workplaces linked to government since at least 2018, but this week it was reported the rules were expanding to smartphones. Many Chinese employees of affected organisations have a separate phone for work.

On Thursday the Wall Street Journal and Reuters reported that China had widened existing curbs on state employees, telling staff at some central government agencies to stop using their iPhones at work. Staff were given the instructions in workplace chat groups or meetings.

In response to the news, Apple shares fell more than 6% over Wednesday and Thursday, though they opened slightly up yesterday. Greater China - including Hong Kong and Taiwan - is Apple's third largest market and accounted for 19% of its $394bn (£316bn) in sales last year.

The Morgan Stanley analyst Erik Woodring said Apple's share losses were "overdone" as he did not believe the curbs would lead to something broader. Woodring predicted the worst-case scenario was a 4% revenue hit for the company.

"China is critical to Apple's success, but Apple is also critical to the Chinese economy," he said. "While the potential for a broad decoupling between Apple and China in this multipolar world clearly exists, we don't believe recent headlines are necessarily foreshadowing this 'worst case' scenario."

Apple production remains centred in China, with about 90% of its products made in the country. Among others, the Taiwan-founded Apple supplier Foxconn has its megafactories in China, employing more than 1.2 million people.

But after political instability and pandemic disruptions, Apple has accelerated plans to move some production elsewhere, including to Vietnam, and iPhone 14 production was moved to India.

6%

The decline in Apple's share price on Wednesday and Thursday as stock markets reacted to the ban

The move last year was the first time Apple had assembled an iPhone model outside China the same year it was released and was widely seen as the big step in moving manufacturing operations from the Chinese state. India is the world's second-largest smartphone market.

Apple has found itself the latest tech industry victim of geopolitical tensions between the US and China. Some analysts suggested Beijing's bans on its products were part of tit-for-tat measures, after bans by the US and other countries - including Costa Rica last week - on Huawei from national 5G networks.

The US government has banned approvals of new telecommunications equipment from the Chinese telecoms firms Huawei and ZTE because they pose "an unacceptable risk" to national security. It has also banned the Chinese-owned video app TikTok from government-issued phones and has imposed restrictions on the export of some sophisticated computer chips to China.

Beijing has told operators of important infrastructure in China to stop buying products from the US chipmaker Micron Technology, while ramping up efforts to be more self-sufficient in making semiconductors.

Apple was contacted for comment.

Sahara to Stonehenge
The sunset on Thursday over Wiltshire was tinged with red, in a week when dust from the north African desert covered large parts of the country, according to the Met Office.

PHOTOGRAPH: NICK BULL/ PICTURE EXCLUSIVE







St Andrews still top in Guardian rankings of UK universities

Rachel Hall
Richard Adams

St Andrews has cemented its lead as the best university in the country, pulling further away from Oxford and Cambridge in the latest Guardian University Guide.

The Fife university came top of the table for the first time in 2022, after knocking Oxford off the second spot in 2019. The gap between first place and Oxford and Cambridge in second and third place respectively has widened, while St Andrews has claimed top spot in nine of the individual subject rankings, more than ever before.

Prof Dame Sally Mapstone, St Andrews' vice-chancellor, said: "I think everyone associated with St Andrews will be absolutely delighted. To be ranked top last year was very special, to do it two years in succession risks becoming habit-forming. It is a great compliment to our fantastic academic and professional services staff, the university's longstanding commitment to a very special blend of research-led teaching and the hard work of our remarkable students."

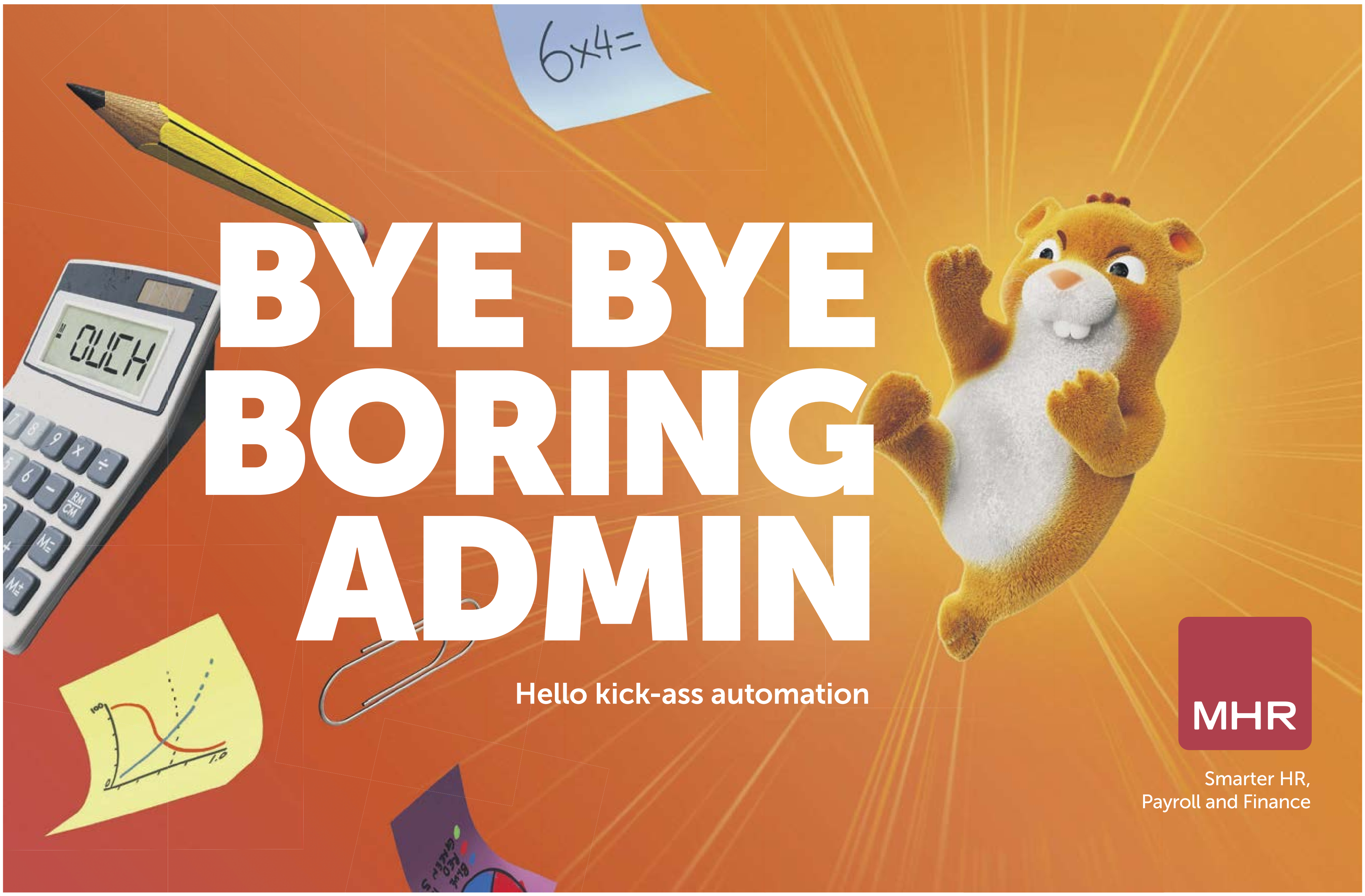
St Andrews' improved position is because of higher grades from incoming students, a higher rate of students completing their courses, improved graduate prospects and a slightly lower staff to student ratio.

The London School of Economics came fourth again and Imperial College London took fifth. Other changes to the top 10 were Bath claiming sixth place, pushing Durham into seventh, and University College London taking the eighth spot above Warwick.

Oxbridge shone in the subject tables, with Oxford increasing its haul of first places to 11, more than any other university, including in economics, geography and computer science. St Andrews was top for languages and linguistics, business and management and psychology, while Cambridge was top for subjects including theology and medicine.

The two biggest risers were Portsmouth at 33 and Soas University of London at 52, both climbing 34 places. The university that has shown the most consistent improvement over five years is the University of the Arts London. It has progressed from 45th four years ago to 26th, 19th and now 15th, its highest ranking.

University Guide 2024 →



▼ 'The Devil Wears Prada does politics': Gillian Keegan makes an entrance at No 10 this week
PHOTOGRAPH PETER NICHOLLS/REUTERS



Keegan's 'hot mic' moment

Outburst catapults education secretary into the public eye

Aubrey Allegretti
Senior political correspondent

Fierce, no-nonsense and self-assured. Those are the qualities that helped Gillian Keegan go from leaving school at 16 to a successful business and political career - culminating in her reaching the cabinet. But they have also proved a setback, as the education secretary found herself at the centre of a storm concerning her handling of the crisis over crumbling concrete in schools.

"Does anyone ever say: 'You know what, you've done a fucking good job because everyone else has sat on their arse and done nothing?'" she fumed after a TV interview where she had been challenged about school closures.

It was a "hot mic" moment when the normally collected Keegan's true temperament was revealed in a flash. It riled some and endeared her to others.

Keegan's background is a far cry from the "men in grey suits" stereotype of Tory MPs. Brought up in Huyton, near Liverpool, she called getting 10 O-levels "something of a miracle". The options for progressing to A-levels were practically non-existent, so Keegan left school at 16 to become an apprentice at a car factory in nearby Kirkby.

She was inspired to support the Conservative party by her experiences growing up in Liverpool in the 1980s, where the Militant group dominated the city council. Time on the factory floor also shaped her political views. She was frustrated by the unions' resistance to changing working practices.

After gaining a business degree from Liverpool John Moores and later a master's from the London Business School, Keegan took jobs at General Motors, NatWest and Mastercard.

It was her business connections that would later help her succeed with a jump into politics. At a drinks event for London Business School alumni, Keegan collared Justine Greening, who at the time was the education secretary.

With typical forthrightness, Keegan told Greening she was keen on running for parliament and sought her advice. Within the year she had become director of Women2Win, a group set up by Theresa May and Anne Jenkin to help more Conservative women into politics. She was "exactly the type of person" David Cameron was looking for in his effort to modernise the party, said one ally.

Keegan was selected and went on to become the MP for Chichester in 2017. She served as a backbencher for nearly four years - using her maiden speech to push for greater investment in apprenticeships. "I am here today because of the life chance I had at 16. Everybody deserves that chance," she said.

Keegan was not totally estranged from politics: her father-in-law, Denis Keegan, represented Nottingham South for the Conservatives in the 1950s.

When Rishi Sunak was installed in Downing Street in October, he gave Keegan her dream job of education secretary.

She has experienced some hiccups - coming under fire for being on holiday during the Department for Education's mishandling of summer exam results owing to disruption caused by Covid when she was a minister there in 2020.

> *'She's been hideously arrogant expecting people to ever thank her for doing her job'*
>
> **Conservative MP**
> *After Keegan's outburst*

"What she really needed was to work with a great secretary of state as a junior minister to learn the ropes … who did she get instead? Gavin Williamson," sighed one senior Tory. "Gavin didn't know what he was doing, so it was hardly like she was getting any good tips."

Keegan sees herself as a tough nut, but her outburst this week caused frustration among Tory MPs. "She's capable and clever, but she's been hideously arrogant by expecting people to ever thank her for doing her job," said one.

Keegan relishes the attention. She laughed off a striking photograph of her posing over the rim of her sunglasses outside No 10 this week, calling it "Devil Wears Prada does politics".

She retains a ferocious attitude to work, meaning civil servants are occasionally kept for briefings late into the evening and some have found her untrusting and abrasive. Despite that, she still commands their respect with her passion for apprenticeships and education.

Keegan enjoys standing out - and an MP friend says she is the party's "most relatable frontbencher".

"Keir Starmer is basically a local authority jobsworth with a clipboard. She's the total opposite, but unfortunately she has to play by the same rules," they said.

Education

Sunak tries to draw line under schools' Raac crisis

Kiran Stacey
Delhi

Rishi Sunak has defended his government's decision to shut schools because of problems with crumbling concrete and aims to use this weekend's G20 summit in New Delhi to draw a line under another bruising week in office.

The prime minister told reporters on the trip to India that Gillian Keegan, the education secretary, had done the right thing in ordering 147 schools to close buildings made with aerated concrete, after concerns about structural defects.

Some people in Whitehall have reportedly said Keegan has been overly cautious and has opened a "Pandora's box" that could lead to many public buildings having to be closed. Some close to Sunak are concerned the issue could turn into another spiralling crisis, drowning out recent news pointing to the beginning of an economic recovery.

Sunak said: "[The Department for Education] have acted exactly correctly in response to new information that was relevant to them. We will ensure the safety of children and these buildings, and that's why we put in place a very rapid process to do that."

He said the example set by schools would not necessarily have to be followed by other public buildings, including prisons and hospitals. "Departments individually will follow that advice as it relates to their particular estate," he said. "It is very specific to the circumstances of individual buildings and how in particular they can be monitored and assessed. For example, the NHS has been for years looking at this and has a mitigation programme in place which is funded with £700m already."

Sunak hopes the schools issue will be sorted within weeks to give a boost to his beleaguered premiership. Polls show Labour has almost a 20-point lead over the Conservatives, and several of the prime minister's five priorities remain unfulfilled.

Sunak arrived in Delhi yesterday to be greeted by music and dancing and was looking forward to a warmer reception than he often gets from British voters. As the UK's first prime minister of Indian descent, he said he was looking forward to a "historic" trip where he would be greeted as "India's son-in-law".

Sunak's chief of staff has reportedly said any adviser who thinks the party cannot win the next election should quit. Meanwhile, Sunak has shaken up his Downing Street operation, appointing Nerissa Chesterfield as head of communications and bringing in the former Conservative aides Jamie Njoku-Goodwin and Adam Atashzai to help try to regain control of the political narrative.





▲ *At least two primary schools in Leicester have faced disruption after Raac was discovered* PHOTOGRAPHS: JOSEPH WALSHE/SWNS; JACOB KING/PA WIRE

Sunak said they would help to inject new energy into his operation. "I can tell you, certainly in Downing Street, we are fired up," he said. "We've brought some new people in … these are very high quality people that are joining the team because they believe that we will win. They are hungry to win, I am hungry to win, and they are fired up to deliver it."

His words echo those made by former party leaders in similar situations. In 2015, facing accusations that he was not motivated enough to win the next election, David Cameron told an audience that he was "pumped up" by the small business revolution happening in the UK.

Ed Miliband, then the Labour leader, was asked if he was tough enough to become prime minister, to which he responded: "Hell, yes, I'm tough enough."

Sunak said: "We've got plenty of time between now and the next election. I'm not complacent, there's lots of work to do, but I'm entirely confident we can deliver for people."

Airports

Heathrow and Gatwick monitoring affected areas

Gwyn Topham
Transport correspondent

The crumbling concrete that recently closed hundreds of schools has also been found within two of Britain's biggest airports, it has been revealed.

Both London Heathrow and Gatwick confirmed that some of their buildings contain reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (Raac) and were being monitored.

Heathrow said it was taking "remedial steps" to mitigate any safety risk, while Gatwick said it was constantly monitoring affected areas. Both airports said passenger safety and operations would not be affected by the building materials.

Heathrow's main operating terminals, T2 and T5, were both constructed after use of the "bubbly concrete" was largely discontinued. The airport carried out work on Raac found in T3 last year, before the problems identified in school buildings this year forced many to close just before the start of the autumn term.

The recent concerns prompted Heathrow to carry out a fresh review of its Raac management plans, but the airport has not altered its approach.

Gatwick would not disclose where Raac was located, but it is understood to have been long aware of its presence and to have no indication of any risk. A Gatwick spokesperson said: "We have a register of locations containing Raac on the airport campus, which are closely monitored through a regular comprehensive structural inspection regime. Our most recent inspection in June 2023 did not present any concerns and we will continue to monitor on a regular basis."

A Heathrow spokesperson said: "We, like many others, have been assessing our estate and will continue to mitigate the risk where this material is found. Passenger and colleague safety will always be our first priority and we will continue to update stakeholders across the sector as our plans for permanent solutions progress."

A spokesperson for Manchester Airports Group, which owns Stansted and Manchester airports, said that there was "no likelihood" of Raac in their buildings, but the airports were being checked as a precaution.

Raac poses a bigger risk in buildings that have been poorly maintained, such as schools and hospitals in the public sector, where budgets have been cut to the bone since 2010.

Chris Goodier, professor of construction engineering and materials at Loughborough University, told the Financial Times that the presence of Raac was unlikely to affect airports, which have full-time maintenance teams. adding: "They've got money and they spend money because if they had to close a building it would cost them a lot."

Theatres Curtains come down as crumbling concrete is found

Mabel Banfield-Nwachi

Theatres across the UK have joined the dozens of schools forced to close or partly close due to concerns over crumbling concrete, reigniting fears over cultural institutions' post-lockdown survival.

The Forum theatre in Stockport had to cancel all weekend shows and close indefinitely owing to the use of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (Raac). In line with updated government guidance, the theatre will remain closed until it gets the all-clear from a structural engineer.

Darren Stannage, the company manager of NK Theatre Arts, which is based at the Forum, described it as heartbreaking, especially "just after coming back from Covid".

"We work with 200 children and young people every week, so to suddenly find that we can't operate at all for providing facilities for them and services for them, to be in a position where in a moment's notice – literally 24 hours ago – we had to announce that the theatre was closed … it's actually heartbreaking," he said.

Several other theatres in England found to contain Raac – including the Orchard theatre in Dartford, the YMCA theatre in Scarborough and the Royal & Derngate in Northampton – have also suspended performances and shut their doors in response to the Department for Education's guidance.

The latest advice recommends that buildings that have confirmed or suspected Raac should be closed until "appropriate mitigations are in place", even if they would have been deemed "non-critical" in the past.

Thousands of pupils in England are already facing disruption at the start of term after Raac, a lightweight but less durable concrete with a limited lifespan of about 30 years, was identified at 147 schools and education settings in England. Last night the Scottish government said that 16 out of 32 local authorities have identified Raac in their schools.

Stannage said: "It was very difficult that suddenly, last week, the theatre was a safe environment and everything's all OK. And then the following week, nothing has changed other than the guidance."

Another theatre, the Brunton in Musselburgh, East Lothian, had to deal with "shock news" of the temporary closure of performance spaces in March after Raac was found in some of the building's roof slabs.

The National Theatre in London said it was surveying "a small number" of areas where the concrete had been found. The theatre said early investigations suggested the material was safe.

Many theatres were "only just recovering" from lockdowns and increased operation costs post-Covid, Stannage said. He added that he was worried about the long-term implications of having to close: "The longer it goes on, we have revenue problems … and everyone's going to be in that boat."

Boy, 10, dies days after suffering electric shock at Blackpool hotel

Josh Halliday
North of England correspondent

A boy aged 10 has died after suffering an electric shock at a seaside hotel. The incident took place in the lounge of Tiffany's hotel in Blackpool on Sunday, police said yesterday.

The boy, who has not been named, was taken to hospital but died from his injuries on Thursday.

Lancashire constabulary said officers had been called to the hotel on the Promenade at 10.39pm after the child was found unresponsive in its lounge area. He was taken to hospital with injuries "consistent with coming into contact with a high voltage of electricity".



▲ *The boy was found unresponsive in the lounge area of Tiffany's hotel*

The boy's family were by his bedside as doctors made every effort to save him, the force said. It said the matter had been passed to the local authority and a file was being prepared for the coroner.

The hotel has closed while an investigation is carried out. A spokesperson said: "We are deeply saddened by this recent incident involving a child who has received a shock on Sunday evening within our reception lounge area. We want to reassure everybody that the health and safety of our guests and team remains our number one priority.

"We have taken the decision to voluntarily close temporarily while we undertake our own inspections."

Two years ago Tiffany's – known locally as the "pink hotel" – was criticised by guests who claimed part of the ceiling had fallen through into their bedroom.

The group of eight, from Glasgow, also complained about mould and damp that led to water dripping from the ceiling.



ANTIGUA

FLIGHTS + 7 NIGHTS HOTEL FROM £719 PP

SALE ENDS 3 OCTOBER

BRITISH AIRWAYS
A BRITISH ORIGINAL

oneworld · 5985 ATOL PROTECTED

Book today at ba.com/antigua

Antigua and Barbuda — The beach is just the beginning...

Prices are subject to change and availability. Price stated is per person based on 2 adults sharing, inclusive of all airport taxes, fees and charges (additional resort/hotel fees, taxes and service charges may apply) and includes return economy (World Traveller) flights from London Gatwick to V.C. Bird International Airport, 23kg baggage per person and a minimum of seven nights 3* accommodation in Antigua for travel on selected dates between 01 May 2024 – 31st September 2024 inclusive only. Book by 3rd October 2023. Full terms and conditions at ba.com/sale. British Airways Holidays reserve the right to amend or withdraw this offer at any time. Package Holidays from British Airways Holidays Ltd are ATOL protected (No. 5985). British Airways Holidays standard terms and conditions and conditions of carriage apply. All information is correct at time of publishing – 22 August 2023, errors and omissions excepted (E&OE).

Woman has benefit axed for working one second too long

Simon Hattenstone

The Department for Work and Pensions has cut off a benefit claimant's employment and support allowance (ESA) because she accidentally stated she had worked one second over the maximum allotted time.

ESA is a benefit paid to people who cannot work full-time because of illness, disability or a health condition. Claimants are permitted to work for less than 16 hours a week and still claim ESA.

The Guardian Heat or Eat diarist Liz (a pseudonym) is paid ESA because of a number of health conditions including diverticulitis, fibromyalgia and osteoarthritis. She is a single mother with two teenage children.

After her employer changed the way she paid her from pay packet to pay as you earn, Liz had to fill in a form for HM Revenue and Customs. When asked how many hours a week she worked, she wrote 16 hours, not realising that took her over the permitted time by one second.

Liz only realised that her ESA had been cut off when she went shopping and discovered she did not have sufficient money because her benefits had not been paid. A few days later she received a letter from the DWP stating: "We have looked at your circumstances and decided you will no longer get employment and support allowance from 3 August 2023."

Under the heading "the reason for our decision", the letter said: "We now know you work an average of 16 hours a week." The letter was sent out one week after her ESA was cut off.

She then received a letter from Somerset council informing her that her housing benefit and council tax reduction had been suspended because "the Department for Work and Pensions tell us your income has changed".

16
Number of working hours per week at which employment and support allowance is cut off by the DWP

Liz said she had lost about £1,200 a month in benefits, including £717.84 in ESA and £495 in housing benefit.

In yesterday's column, Liz wrote that she had £30 in the bank and did not know how she would make it through the month. "Now I know you can call me an idiot but if I've made this mistake, there must be tens of thousands out there just like me," she wrote. "The DWP has been waiting to pounce on our ignorance, on a technical error, to break us. And I'm lucky. Other people can't tell their story through the Guardian like I can. It's pure vindictiveness."

The disability equality charity Scope told the Guardian that its helpline had recently dealt with a case where a claimant who worked 15 hours a week had their ESA cut off after attending paid-for training courses at the request of their employer. At the time, the person did not even know they had been paid to attend the courses.

Louise Rubin, the head of policy at Scope, said: "Situations like these are why disabled people have so little trust in our welfare system. The system is cold, harsh and uncaring. Our helpline often hears from disabled people who have had their benefits stopped but don't know why, or haven't been told.

"In a cost of living crisis it's more important than ever that we have a system that works with disabled people rather than against them."

Helen Barnard, the director of policy, research and impact at the Trussell Trust, the UK's biggest food bank network, said: "The social security system should be there for all of us when we need it, and it should be administered in a compassionate and just manner. The DWP has a duty of care to claimants, many of whom are already facing hunger and debt and have no buffer to enable them to weather unexpected shocks to their income."

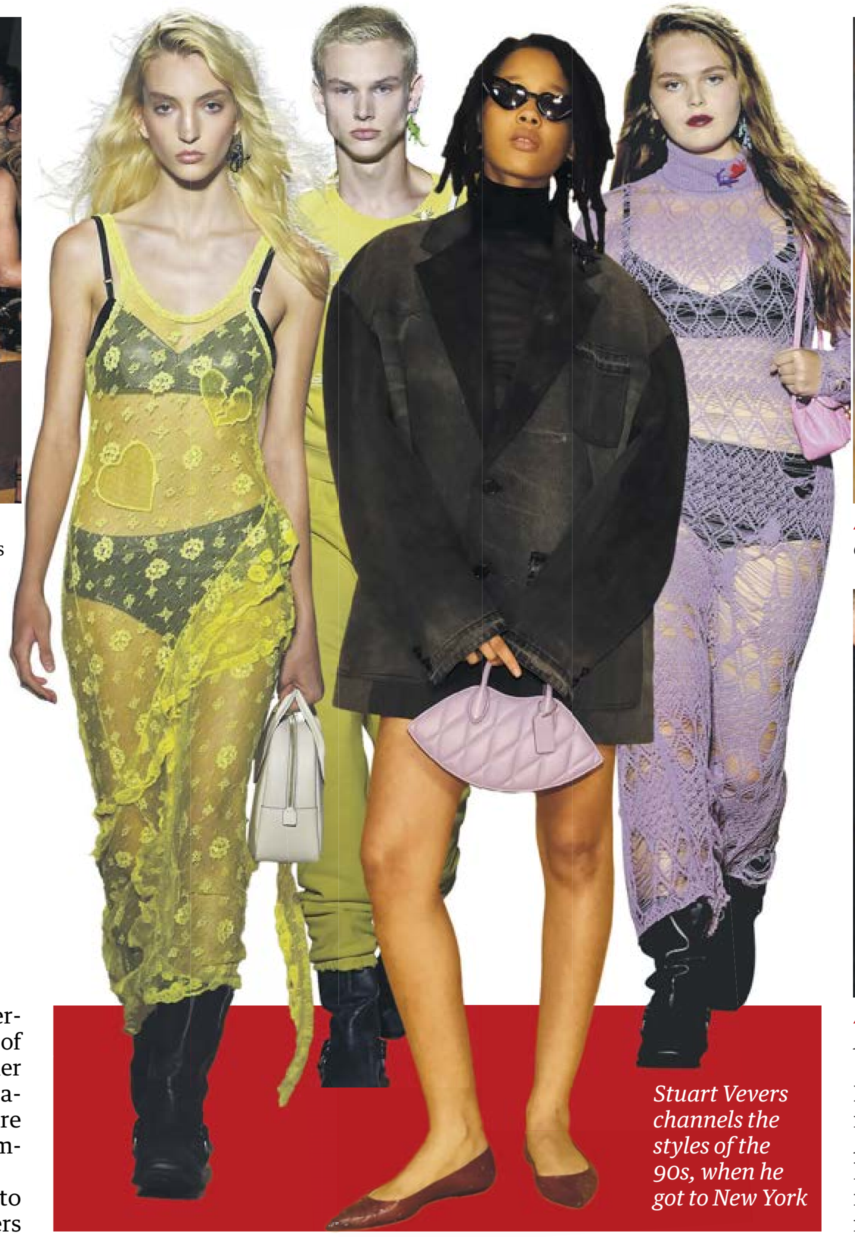
The Guardian asked the DWP if it automatically cut off ESA without consulting claimants when they had obviously erred in thinking that 16 hours was the cutoff, rather than a second below. The department declined to answer.

A DWP spokesperson said: "Anyone working 16 hours or more a week is not eligible for employment and support allowance – which helps those unable to work, or taking steps to return to work. Claimants who have made a mistake on their claim can ask for the decision to be reconsidered, while those not entitled to ESA may be able to claim universal credit – which is designed so that working always pays more."



▲ *Edward Enninful, Jennifer Lopez and Anna Wintour at Coach's show, which kicked off New York fashion week* PHOTOGRAPH: NINA WESTERVELT/GETTY IMAGES

Anti-leather protest on Coach catwalk highlights dilemma for fashion houses



Stuart Vevers channels the styles of the 90s, when he got to New York



▲ *Protesters briefly joined models on the catwalk at the Coach show*



▲ *Backstage at the show, held in the New York public library this week*

Chloe Mac Donnell
New York

The American luxury brand Coach broke library protocol this week when it kicked off New York fashion week by staging its spring/summer 2024 collection at the New York Public Library.

Instead of shushing librarians and hardback chairs at the second largest public library in the US, there were plush velvet lined benches and celebrities including the actor Jennifer Lopez and the rapper Lil Nas X.

However, it was campaigners for the animal rights organisation Peta who attempted to cause the biggest disturbance.

Two female protesters, one wearing a flesh-painted bodysuit and another carrying a placard reading "leather kills" briefly joined the models on the catwalk before being led away by security.

The intervention came after Peta declared in July that it was aiming to make the use of wool and leather as unacceptable as fur.

Many see this as an unattainable goal. Leather goods are the cornerstone of the success of the majority of luxury brands and while faux leather is often hailed as a vegan alternative, options such as "pleather" are derived from plastic and petroleum-based materials.

However, with brands keen to entice Gen Z – a cohort of consumers who will represent 40% of the luxury goods market by 2035 and who are increasingly concerned about sustainable fashion – the race has begun to find a way around this leather conundrum.

Speaking before the show, Coach's creative director, Stuart Vevers, described the catwalk as "a place to experiment with new concepts in sustainability".

In April, it launched Coachtopia, a sub-brand featuring bags made from leather destined for landfill. At Thursday night's show, it took it one step further with a large number of the clothes including biker jackets and short, strappy dresses, made by repurposing existing leather including dead stock and leftover factory floor scraps. Other pieces were made from items that customers had donated to its in-store recycling initiative.

In an era when secondhand shopping has become a new type of humblebrag, it's also a clever way of appealing to a customer who wants to buy something new but does not necessarily want that piece to look brand new.

Vevers said this season was about "stripping back to the essential designs and quality materials".

> ***'It's about handbags still being used in another 50 years'***
>
> **Stuart Vevers**
> *Coach creative director*

This included handbags, such as its bestselling Tabby bag, which Vevers envisions "still being used in another 50 years". Price tags start from £250, a price point that is considered a sweet spot for luxury.

The collection marked the 10th anniversary of Vevers' tenure at Coach. Despite spending a decade as a Brit in the city, Vevers said he was keen to maintain "an outsider perspective". He is known for an ongoing fascination with Americana, an interest first fuelled by watching American films as a teenager in Doncaster, South Yorkshire.

Instead of a retrospective of looks, Vevers explored his own personal memories of arriving in the city as a graduate during the 1990s. Grungy slip dresses were inspired by the girls he used to dance with at the Pyramid Club in the East Village, a mecca for artists and drag queens. A T-shirt emblazoned with "Donohue's Steak House" was a nod to his favourite restaurant, which opened in the 1950s.

Coach is part of the Tapestry group, which also owns Kate Spade and Stuart Weitzman, and last month announced it was acquiring Capri Holdings, the owner of Versace, Michael Kors and Jimmy Choo.

The $8.5bn (£6.8bn) deal marks one of the biggest attempts in American fashion to create a US-based luxury fashion conglomerate to rival European giants such as LVMH, home to Louis Vuitton and Dior, and Kering, which owns Gucci and Saint Laurent, among others.

Coach has become Tapestry's most successful brand. It generates nearly three-quarters of Tapestry's revenues and while in August Tapestry reported net sales of $6.66bn in 2023, a slight drop from $6.68bn in 2022, sales at Coach grew 5% in the fourth quarter.

Osman got rejected by MI6 after 'tap on shoulder' at Cambridge

Kevin Rawlinson
Charlotte Edwardes

Richard Osman received the "tap on the shoulder" from MI6 while he was a student at Cambridge University, and interviewed for a role as a spy, he has revealed in a Guardian interview.

The television star and crime fiction author said he was not able to develop a career in the secret services, however, because he had failed the "fun" tests he was set and – in any case – would have been an awful spy.

"They just said, 'No, it's fine'," he said of the end of the process, after he had spent time doing war-gaming scenarios and chatting to people "who got older and posher throughout the day".

He added: "I would have been terrible. I'm too tall [201cm/6ft 7in], not bright enough, and if I have a secret, I tell everybody. You could not find a worse spy … I cannot tell a lie."

It is often said that writers write what they know, though it would perhaps be a stretch to say so of Osman and one of his best-known fictional characters, the Thursday Murder Club's Elizabeth – a former spy. Indeed, Osman said she was the series' character with whom he had least in common.

Nevertheless, he joked: "I'm still available, by the way, if MI6 read this. I could be useful, because no one is going to suspect me now."

The method by which Osman was selected for interview was perhaps the most cliched: a Cambridge undergraduate given the famed "tap on the shoulder". In recent years, MI6 – known officially as the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) – has announced a return to the old-style tap, but with the goal of moving away from the sort of recognised type.

The agency's former chief Alex Younger signalled a return to the method as a means of attracting black and Asian officers and finally dispelling the image of British spies as the preserve of a posh, Oxbridge elite.



▲ *Richard Osman said that he 'would have been terrible' as a spy*

Younger told the Guardian in 2017 that MI6 had "suffered from groupthink". He said: "I'm quite passionate about this. We have to go out and ask these people to join us. Before we were avowed as a service, that was the only way of recruiting people, a tap on the shoulder. That was the way I was recruited. We have to go to people that would not have thought of being recruited to MI6. We have to make a conscious effort. We need to reflect the society we live in."

Saturday *Cover story* →

▼ *Akshata Murty, Rishi Sunak's wife, plays football with children at the British Council's centre in Delhi*
PHOTOGRAPH: DAN KITWOOD/PA MEDIA



UK-India trade deal is not guaranteed, says Sunak in run-up to Modi meeting

Kiran Stacey
Political correspondent

Rishi Sunak has insisted a trade deal with India is not guaranteed, as he prepares to meet his Indian counterpart during the G20 summit in Delhi.

The British prime minister will speak to Narendra Modi this weekend at a crunch meeting that could determine the future of a free trade agreement between the two countries, as well as influence India's approach to Russia.

Sunak is hoping to use the meeting to overcome some of the final hurdles that remain in the way of a deal, including the politically sensitive question of visas for Indian workers and students coming to the UK. But he warned in advance that success was far from guaranteed, even after 18 months of tortuous negotiations.

Speaking to reporters on the way to Delhi, Sunak said: "Without question, India is going to be one of the most significant countries geopolitically over the next years and decades, and it's vitally important for the UK to deepen our ties, particularly economically, and more broadly with India.

"That's why we've been working towards an ambitious and comprehensive free trade deal. But it's not a given: these things are a lot of work and a lot of time."

Sunak's immediate predecessors, Liz Truss and Boris Johnson, both pushed to have an agreement in place by last October, in time for Diwali. They were thwarted, however, amid arguments over issues ranging from visas to rules governing intellectual property.

British officials say Sunak has put less emphasis on signing an agreement than either Truss or Johnson. But despite significant areas of disagreement, they remain hopeful a deal can still be done by the end of the year and before Modi hits the campaign trail for the Indian elections next spring.

In a sign that Sunak wants to prioritise good relations with India, he hinted he would not use his meeting with Modi to raise the case of Jagtar Singh Johal, the British man who is facing the death penalty in India having been accused of terror offences.

More than 70 MPs have called on the prime minister to urge Modi to release Johal, who comes from Dumbarton, West Dunbartonshire, and who the campaign group Reprieve says has been tortured and made to sign false confessions.

UN climate summit PM was warned he faced exclusion

Rishi Sunak was warned that he faced exclusion from key discussions on the climate among world leaders at the UN before he decided to snub the global summit later this month.

It was announced last month that Sunak would be the first prime minister in a decade to avoid attending the annual UN general assembly (UNGA) gathering of world leaders. The reason given was his busy schedule, but the Guardian has learned that turning up risked severe embarrassment for the prime minister.

The UN secretary general, António Guterres, has called on world leaders to attend his climate ambition summit on the sidelines of this year's UNGA meeting. Leaders of the world's major economies, including Joe Biden of the US plus EU and other G20 countries are expected to go.

But Guterres has stipulated that only countries that can show they have ambitious policies to reduce their emissions in line with the goals of the Paris agreement would be allowed to participate in the climate ambition summit.

World leaders received letters from the UN last month making these terms clear, the Guardian understands. They were told that merely having net zero targets would not be sufficient to guarantee participation, and evidence of clear policy measures and commitments was needed. Without this, countries could attend but not participate.

The climate ambition summit will take place at the UN headquarters in New York on 20 September, after heads of state and government meet over the preceding two days.

The UK government has caused consternation by seeming to waver on its commitments to net zero emissions and the 2015 Paris climate agreement.

The prime minister's decision over the summer to "max out" the North Sea by licensing new oil and gas fields raised eyebrows.

Sunak would risk falling foul of the UN secretary general's strict stipulations if he were to attempt to participate in the climate segment.

A No 10 spokesperson said: "The UK delegation at the UN general assembly high-level week will be led by the deputy prime minister, accompanied by the foreign secretary and others.

"The prime minister is expected to hold discussions with a number of world leaders in the coming weeks, including at the G20 summit in Delhi and the Cop28 summit in the UAE."

Fiona Harvey

'I've never put artificial deadlines on these trade deals. I've always said we shouldn't sacrifice quality for speed'

Rishi Sunak
Prime minister

The prime minister refused to say he would do so. He added: "This is something that has already been raised on multiple levels on multiple occasions."

In another sign of Sunak's keenness to strike a trade agreement, Downing Street said that business visas could be a part of an eventual deal - but not student visas. New Delhi says it does not want increased numbers of visas but merely a streamlined process for applying for intra-company transfers.

Officials on both sides believe they will be able to reach agreement on the visa issue, although Sunak faces political resistance from his allies at home if he does. This week, Suella Braverman, the home secretary, made clear to her cabinet colleagues that she would oppose any agreement that increased the UK's record migration levels.

Speaking before his meeting with Modi, Sunak insisted he would not sign a deal just for the sake of it. "I've never put artificial deadlines on these trade deals. I've always said we shouldn't sacrifice quality for speed," he said. "And we need to end up with something that works genuinely for both sides."

He also said he was looking forward to a "special" trip to Delhi, where he believes he will be welcomed as "India's son-in-law".

Speaking to journalists on the journey to Delhi, Sunak said: "It's special. I'll be visiting a country that is very dear to me. I haven't been back for a few years."

The prime minister usually took his family to India every February, but said he had abandoned those annual trips since being made chancellor in 2020. He added: "I saw somewhere that I was referred to as India's son-in-law, which I hope was meant affectionately. But I'm excited to be back. It's nice to have Akshata [Murty, his wife] with me as well."

Unlike most other world leaders, Sunak enjoys a special status in India as the grandson of Indian immigrants and a practising Hindu. He and Murty will visit the vast Akshardham Hindu temple in Delhi opened in 2005.

UK officials are hoping that the star status enjoyed by both Sunak and Murty in India will cut through with the public and help the prime minister secure concessions from Modi.

The British prime minister is not due to meet Sergei Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, during the summit. Sunak said, however, that he would have a strong message for Moscow if the pair did come face to face.

The prime minister told reporters: "The message is, the fact that Putin is not there demonstrates his isolation in the global community. He wasn't there last year, he's not there this year to answer for what he's doing. He doesn't want to be held accountable."

'They are ashamed of us'

Poorer communities are hidden behind screens

Aakash Hassan
Hannah Ellis-Petersen *Delhi*

The first time that Saroaj Devi heard about the G20 was when tall walls were erected around the slum where she lives. The barricades, she realised, were to hide their impoverished homes from the foreign leaders who will descend on Delhi this weekend for the G20 summit, and part of a £100m facelift that has given Delhi a glossy upgrade while its poor communities have been removed from sight and several slums razed.

"They have covered our area so that poor people like us, and poverty in the country, is not witnessed by the people arriving from abroad," says Devi, 50. "When it is election time, every politician comes to see us. They eat with us and make promises. But today, they are ashamed of our presence."

On the hoardings that now surround their slums are posters with the face of the prime minister, Narendra Modi, to welcome the G20 delegates likely to pass by.

For Devi and others living in Coolie Camp in south Delhi, the summit will deal a blow not only to their dignity but also to their livelihoods. In an attempt to keep security tight and the roads clear as Joe Biden, Rishi Sunak and Olaf Scholz arrive, a shutdown has been imposed on the city's 32 million people. All schools, offices, markets, restaurants and non-food shops have been ordered to close for three days, movement on roads will be restricted, and people have been asked to stay at home.

While the Delhi police have said this is "not a lockdown", the daily wage earners of the city, many of whom live hand-to-mouth and cannot afford to lose even one day of work, say it will be devastating.

"Do we not have to go to work and eat food? Should we die because we are poor?" says Devi, who works as a cleaner and earns 3,000 rupees (£29) a month but will now see a pay cut she can't afford.

"I don't miss any day of work, even when I am sick, only because I cannot afford to lose any money.

£100m

Funding for a municipal facelift in Delhi as the world's eyes turn to the city for the G20 leaders' summit

4,000

Number of homeless people who have been moved out of the city centre to shelters on the outskirts



▶ *The wall - and the weekend's economic shutdown - have left many poorer people in the capital out of pocket*
PHOTOGRAPH: AMIT DAVE/REUTERS

But what can poor people like me do in these situations? Poor people like us will only curse this event because we are going to suffer and our bellies will be hungry."

Vineet Singh, 35, who runs a grocery shop in the slum, says the barricade hid his business from view and he had to cut a hole so customers could enter. His earnings had already fallen from about 1,000 rupees a day to a few hundred. "I have a family to feed. Who will compensate for my losses?"

In Hafiz Nagar, a slum opposite the gleaming new conference centre where the summit will take place today and tomorrow, residents say police have for days stopped them from going out. Mohammad Imran, 45, says he has not been able to work for several days: "We are being treated like insects, not humans."

In recent days, more than 4,000 homeless people who were living under flyovers and on roads have been shifted to shelters on the outskirts of Delhi. Harsh Mander, a civil society activist in Delhi, says there has been "a kind of feverish attempt to either expel the poor from the city or to erase them from public view". He added: "We are the fifth-largest economy in the world, but the reality is that we also have the largest population in the world of people living in poverty. Expelling the large mass of impoverished people from view is an attempt to cast a veil on this other side of economic prosperity, which is extreme inequality."

For road vendors, who will bear three days of losses, the shutdown is particularly galling. They had been ordered by the government to refurbish their businesses for the summit at their own cost - but now are unable to open.

Sunil Sharma, 39, who runs a tea shop near a metro station, says he had to take out a loan of 50,000 rupees after he was ordered to paint his shop saffron. "The authorities want this city to look better by making us suffer," he says. "Things appear better from outside now but for us life is more difficult."

United States

Biden seeks to lure Delhi into alliance

Patrick Wintour
Diplomatic Editor

Joe Biden took fresh steps to lure India's prime minister, Narendra Modi, into an alliance designed to contain China yesterday, at a bilateral meeting in Delhi where the pair struck a series of commercial and defence deals covering remote controlled aircraft, semi conductors and quantum computing.

However, the question of press freedom also inadvertently dominated the agenda on the eve of the full G20 summit as journalists were blocked from covering it. Ahead of the bilateral at the prime minister's residence, the US press corps, accustomed to access to the US president, were told to remain outside in a van, out of view of the two leaders.

The US president received a Bollywood-style greeting after his plane, Air Force One, landed, with dancers in flowing purple outfits moving to the tune of American pop music.

The meeting was given an added symbolic importance as the US president was able to seize upon China's president, Xi Jinping's, decision not to attend Modi's much-vaunted summit. The US is trying to make the traditionally neutral India a more explicit partner in a political and defence alliance in the Indo-Pacific.

Washington said in a statement after the meeting that Biden welcomed the joint commitment to democratic values, adding specifically he welcomed an Indian defence department request to purchase US-built remotely controlled aircraft.

India has a number of disputes with China, but it has been wary of joining an implicitly anti-Beijing alliance. Kurt Campbell, White House Indo Pacific envoy, described relations with India as continuing to be a work in progress.

The two leaders also agreed to progress agreements reached in June, including a deal to allow General Electric to produce jet engines in India to power Indian military aircraft. The June agreement was reached during Modi's state visit to Washington.

The US was not expecting to make immediate progress in shifting India from its largely neutral stance on the Russian invasion of Ukraine, but believes if it can start to replace Russia as a leading arms salesman to Delhi, India will have greater latitude to criticise Moscow.



Biden and Modi: deals on defence

The episode with the journalists accompanying Biden underlined the state of press freedom in India despite the two leaders stated shared commitment to democracy. The prime minister's office released a handful of official photographs of the meeting, showing the two leaders seated side by side and chatting amiably.

Biden has decided to delay his planned post summit press conference and hold it at his next stop in Vietnam, reflecting press controls being mounted by Indian officials.

"The President believes the free press is the pillar of our democracy," the White House spokeswoman Karine Jean-Pierre told journalists on board Air Force One, insisting they were working to secure media access.

Biden is bringing cash for the World Bank and promises of climate change that he hopes will show debt-ridden economies in Africa that he has their interest at heart.

World will miss climate targets if fossil fuels are not phased out, says UN

Fiona Harvey
Environment editor

Governments around the world are failing to cut greenhouse gas emissions fast enough to meet the goals of the Paris agreement and stave off climate disaster, a major report by the UN has found.

Meeting the goals will require "phasing out all unabated fossil fuels", the report says, in an acknowledgment that some oil-producing countries may find hard to take.

The need to phase out fossil fuels has not been explicitly adopted by the UN before – in successive rounds of climate talks – and language over "phasing down" has caused controversy at the annual UN climate talks.

There is a "rapidly narrowing window" for governments to move faster, the report warns, as global greenhouse gas emissions must peak by 2025 to limit temperature rises to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels.

Emissions are still rising, however, and there is a gap of 20 to 23 gigatonnes of CO_2 between the cuts needed by 2030 and the world's current emissions trajectory.

The report, which was due next week but was published hurriedly in draft form yesterday, will form the basis of the first "global stocktake" under the 2015 Paris agreement.

However, the 47-page report does not set out in detail which countries are falling behind, nor does it contain specific recommendations directed at particular countries or regions.

Ani Dasgupta, the head of the World Resources Institute thinktank, said the bland tone of the report disguised a catastrophic failure. He said: "The UN's polite prose glosses over what is a truly damning report card for global climate efforts. This report is a wake-up call to the injustice of the climate crisis, and a pivotal opportunity to correct course."

The global stocktake will form the basis of negotiations at the next UN climate summit, Cop28, to be held in Dubai in November.



▲ *A coal-fired power plant in China. The UN has not previously said that fossils fuels should be phased out*
PHOTOGRAPH: KEVIN FRAYER/GETTY IMAGES

> *'The UN's polite prose glosses over what is a truly damning report card for global climate efforts'*
>
> **Ani Dasgupta**
> *Climate thinktank chief*

While most of the recommendations in the report are unremarkable – exhortations to change transport, buildings and high-carbon industries – the finding on fossil fuels stands out. Buried midway through the summary, the recommendation is clear in its meaning, and likely to be explosive in its impact on the negotiations.

"Achieving net zero CO_2 and greenhouse gas emissions requires systems transformations across all sectors and contexts, including scaling up renewable energy while phasing out all unabated fossil fuels, ending deforestation, reducing non-CO_2 emissions and implementing both supply and demand side measures," reads key finding 6 of the report.

Unabated fossil fuels refers to largely untested technology such as carbon capture and storage. Climate campaigners would prefer to leave out the "unabated" qualifier, as there is no guarantee that capturing and storing carbon from fossil fuels will work at the scale needed, but including it may help get wider support.

For years, oil-producing nations have prevented the UN from adopting language that would clearly require a phasing out of fossil fuels. An attempt to get such language included in the outcome of Cop27, in Egypt, failed.

A spokesperson for the European Commission said the EU was strongly in favour. "We welcome and agree with such language. We see the push for global targets on renewables and energy efficiency measures as part of the path to achieve that."

Gareth Redmond-King, the head of international programme at the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit thinktank, said: "The most important part of the report is key finding 6 – the commitment that delivering on Paris means scaling up renewables, phasing out fossil fuels, ending deforestation, tackling methane – transformational changes needed to get to net zero and get on track for 1.5C. Because that's setting the agenda for Cop."



Rainbow Slaw 180g, 43.9p per 100g. Peri Peri Fries 250g, 59.6p per 100g. Medium Piri Piri/Lemon & Herb British Thigh Fillets 360g, £9.14 per kg. Spicy Rice 280g, 66.3p per 100g. Peri Peri Vegan Mayo 150g, 66p per 100g. British Half Chicken Lemon & Herb 900g, £4.43 per kg.

'We all miss you': a year on, family remembers Elizabeth II

Caroline Davies

The king and queen attended private prayers yesterday to mark the anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's death in a day of low-key commemorations by members of the royal family.

Charles and Camilla spent about 30 minutes inside Crathie Kirk after making the short car journey from nearby Balmoral Castle.

Charles, wearing a red tartan kilt, and Camilla, in a blue day dress and cardigan, then went over to greet a small group of members of the public, Balmoral estate workers and a handful of pupils from Crathie primary school who had gathered outside.

The couple were joined by the late queen's niece and nephew, Lady Sarah Chatto and the Earl of Snowdon, the children of her sister, Princess Margaret. The earl was accompanied by his daughter, Lady Margarita Armstrong-Jones, and Lady Sarah by her husband, Daniel, and children, Samuel and Arthur.



King Charles greets estate staff after a service at Crathie Kirk, near Balmoral in Scotland, to commemorate his late mother
PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW MILLIGAN/GETTY IMAGES

The Rev Kenneth Mackenzie, the minister of Crathie Kirk, who officiated at the event, said: "It was a simple reflective time, a time where we were able to give thanks for the life of the late queen and recognise the poignancy of this day for that family and this community, as well as the nation and Commonwealth."

The Prince and Princess of Wales, who are in west Wales, commemorated the late queen at a 10-minute private service in the cloisters at St Davids Cathedral, Pembrokeshire, along with 20 invited guests.

Thou Knowest, Lord, the Secrets of Our Hearts – played during the late queen's funeral – was sung by the cathedral choir.

The couple laid a bouquet of white flowers including ivy, eucalyptus, white roses and waxflowers beside a portrait of the late queen. They were then due to attend a reception with 20 people associated with Elizabeth's previous visits to St Davids, as well as those active in areas in which the couple have an interest, such as mental health and early years.

The Duke of Sussex was seen leaving St George's Chapel, Windsor, where his grandmother was laid to rest next to Prince Philip, having paid a private visit there yesterday morning. Other members of the royal family are also believed to have visited the chapel separately.

Earlier, William and Kate posted a personal message on social media saying: "Today we remember the extraordinary life and legacy of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth. We all miss you. W & C." It was accompanied by a family photo of the late monarch surrounded by her great-grandchildren, including Prince George, Princess Charlotte and Prince Louis and her two youngest grandchildren.

Princess Eugenie wrote on Instagram: "Thinking of you today. Missing you so much but remembering what a life of service, love and dedication to everyone and to your family, who loved you so very much."

The late queen's senior dresser, Angela Kelly, also posted a tribute: "I will never forget you. I will always love you. I miss you my friend."

The king had earlier recorded a message and released a favourite photograph of his mother to mark the anniversary. Charles, speaking at Balmoral, recalled with "great affection her long life, devoted service and all she meant to so many of us".

He said: "I am deeply grateful, too, for the love and support that has been shown to my wife and myself during this year as we do our utmost to be of service to you all."



Photography shows serving suggestion. Products and prices may vary in store, Scotland, Wales, Aldi Local and online.



*All rates are variable. Balances above £50,000 will earn the lower rate of interest of 2.30% AER (2.28% Gross) in months when a withdrawal is not made, otherwise the standard rate applies. Interest is calculated daily and credited to the account monthly. AER stands for Annual Equivalent Rate. This shows you what the gross rate would be if interest were paid and compounded each year. Gross is the rate of interest if interest were paid and not compounded each year. Rates correct at time of printing 6th September 2023. Issued by HSBC UK Bank, 1 Centenary Square, Birmingham, B1 1HQ, United Kingdom. ©HSBC Group 2023. All Rights Reserved. AC062227



'Weston would not be here without the rule. We are so grateful, beyond belief. That saved his life'

Brittany McDaniel
Weston's mother



◀ *Brittany McDaniel with her son Weston. Above right, Weston when he was in hospital with a rare skin condition*

MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: DAN PELED/ THE GUARDIAN

Right to a second opinion

Adopt Australian life-saving rule in UK, say campaigners

Joe Hinchliffe
Brisbane

Six-month-old Weston was fast succumbing to infection in a hospital waiting room when his parents saw a poster that they have no doubt saved his life. Several times in recent days his mother, Brittany McDaniel, and father, Zack Tyndall, had been sent home or made to wait after being told the rash devouring his face was an allergic reaction or a bad case of eczema. Now, as his eyes rolled back into his head, Weston's parents couldn't wait any longer.

That was the moment last October when Tyndall saw a poster explaining "Ryan's rule". Once invoked, it would summon a senior clinician for a second opinion.

The panicked father dialled the number on the poster and a paediatric doctor arrived within minutes. McDaniel says the clinician took one look at her baby and instantly recognised that Weston had staphylococcus scalded skin syndrome. Finally, Weston was administered antibiotics to fight his infection.

Asked what she thinks would have happened without Ryan's rule, McDaniel does not need to wait for the question to finish.





▲ *Ryan Saunders, whose death led to Queensland patients and families being able to question treatment. Right, Martha Mills, who died in London in 2021*

"Weston would not be here," she says. "One hundred per cent, he would not be here. We are so grateful, beyond belief, for Ryan's rule. That saved his life."

Weston's ordeal, first reported by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, took place in Caboolture, about 25 miles from Queensland's capital, Brisbane. But the principle that patients and parents who believe their concerns are not being taken seriously are entitled to a second medical opinion could soon apply in England, too.

Steve Barclay, the health secretary, this week cited Ryan's rule as a measure shown to have saved lives, as ministers consider introducing a similar approach, which would be known as "Martha's rule". Thirteen-year-old Martha Mills died in 2021 after developing sepsis while under the care of King's College hospital NHS foundation trust in south London.

Her mother, Merope Mills, an editor at the Guardian, says she and her husband, Paul Laity, raised concerns about their daughter's deteriorating health a number of times but these were not acted upon. A coroner ruled last year that, had doctors identified the warning signs and transferred her to intensive care earlier, Martha would most probably have survived. Martha would have turned 16 on Monday.

Ryan's rule, too, emerged from the tragedy of what a coroner would find to be, in all likelihood, the avoidable death of a child. Ryan Saunders had not yet turned three when the previously healthy and happy toddler was misdiagnosed with mumps by his usual GP in the Queensland town of Emerald. It was a Thursday in September 2007. Four days later, Ryan was taken to the Emerald hospital before being flown to nearby Rockhampton. There he would die, six days after his first misdiagnosis, from toxic shock syndrome triggered by a streptococcal infection left fatally undetected.

Ryan's parents also felt their concerns weren't listened to by medical staff. Donna Saunders says her son was let down by the system. "If there was a crack to fall in, he fell in it," she says. In 2011, a coroner agreed, finding Ryan's treatment beset by serious errors. That report would pave the way for what would become known as Ryan's rule - a process by which patients of any age, or parents and carers, can call upon a senior clinician for a second opinion.

Saunders says she knows family, friends and colleagues who have since invoked it and experienced positive outcomes. People she has never met have contacted her to tell her how it saved their child's life. She is grateful that Ryan's rule has proved successful in Queensland, glad it has informed similar models in other Australian states - and pleased it is helping inspire reform in the UK. "We don't want anyone ever to go through what we went through," she says. "And it is not just losing a child, it is the constant investigation, that whole process. It is very draining and, even now, it just feels like yesterday. It is still very raw, even after all this time."

Events such as the fast-approaching 16th anniversary of Ryan's death, she says, are a constant reminder of what she has lost. "For us, it's always bittersweet to hear the stories about how Ryan's rule has helped people. We are happy that this is his legacy. At the same time, we would have much rather he be here with us," she says.

Ryan would now be 18. Since his eponymous rule was established in 2013, it has been invoked 10,845 times in Queensland - and its use is increasing. In 2022, Ryan's rule was invoked 1,994 times. So far in 2023, it has been used 1,524 times. A Queensland health department spokesperson attributes that increase to better awareness and says it demonstrates the rule is working "precisely as intended".

"We want everyone who comes to our hospitals to know about this process," the spokesperson says. "We welcome patients or their families asking questions about the care we're providing." The department is proud of having pioneered the "gold standard for patient-led safety".

That said, no system is a fix-all. And baby Weston's journey to recovery has not been an easy one. Even after his correct diagnosis, he spent five days in hospital in such agony that he was given opioid painkillers. Almost 12 months later, Weston is still suffering. His immune system has been decimated by infection and medication. The skin around his mouth is still so sensitive that his diet is severely restricted.

And Weston is an emotional boy, according to his mother, "to say the least". McDaniel is certain that, had her child been correctly diagnosed sooner, he would not bear such physical and emotional scars. "It makes me wonder, as a mum, if they had just listened to me at the start, maybe we wouldn't be going through what we are going through now," she says. And so, inspired by the Saunders family, she and Weston's father are now pushing for change that could prevent other children going through the same ordeal. The family are working with the authorities to improve Ryan's rule. The health department is piloting new measures for parents of children under the age of six to let them invoke Ryan's rule sooner.

This is why McDaniel has now decided to forgo her family's anonymity, protected in early reporting. She knows first-hand how powerful the story of one child can be. Yes, McDaniel and Weston "have their good days and bad". "And we have more bad days than good," she says. "But I am just grateful that he is here, and I just keep reminding myself that he is here, he is alive and he is thriving as best he possibly can."

ORA GWM



DRIVE TRAFFIC
TO THE WEBSITE,
THEY SAID.

The all new, all electric ORA Funky Cat.

You know what to do.

Starmer's reshuffle Smooth move to right seen by some as sure step on path to power

Pippa Crerar
Political editor

In the evening sunshine on the House of Commons terrace on Wednesday, Keir Starmer took some of his closest aides for a drink.

Just three days into the new parliamentary session, and with a successful reshuffle under their belts, they were upbeat.

Earlier, at prime minister's questions, the Labour leader had likened Rishi Sunak's government to a group of "cowboy builders" over the crumbling concrete in schools. With the government on the back foot, Labour aides couldn't believe their luck.

"It's been a good week," admitted one usually cautious adviser. "But we can't be complacent. We still have a long way to go and anything could happen." But the expectation is growing, both inside and outside the Labour party, that Starmer will be the next prime minister.

It rounded off a promising start to the new parliamentary term for Labour after a summer during which the Tories struggled to shake off the narrative that they are in meltdown. Last Sunday, the day before MPs returned, Starmer met his closest team to put his finishing touches to the reshuffle.

Early the next morning he gathered his new chief of staff, Sue Gray, on her first day in the job; Alan Campbell, the chief whip; Luke Sullivan, his political director; and Jill Cuthbertson, leader of his office, into the Harriet Harman room in his Westminster offices.

"The list we began with is the one we ended up with. That's a rare thing for a reshuffle," one senior aide said. Others credit Gray with its efficiency. John McTernan, political secretary to Tony Blair in Downing Street, said: "It was done quickly and slickly and I saw the hand of Sue Gray in that. It's important to do these things well."

McTernan added: "I also saw clear judgment being made. You were demoted or fired from the shadow cabinet because you were underperforming, and promoted because of your talent. It really sent a message that Keir is choosing to use his authority."

The reshuffle, months in the making, was viewed by many as a return of the Blairites, with half a dozen Blair-era former ministers and advisers - including Liz Kendall and Peter Kyle - getting top jobs.

It is true that Starmer receives advice from Peter Mandelson, one of New Labour's architects, and talks to Blair himself regularly. Senior aides do not deny that this first reshuffle since November 2021 represents a march of the Blairites, but one adds: "That shows a march of experience, doesn't it?"

Many on the left of the party are uncomfortable. "It's an entirely factional takeover," one shadow minister says. "It's all the Blairites and they'll all be champing at the bit to prove themselves. It's definitely a shoring up of the right of the party."

Even internal critics, however, recognise the need for discipline this close to an election. "It's not brilliant but everybody is so focused on winning we're all staying very disciplined," says another shadow minister.

The reshuffle underlines the influence of Morgan McSweeney, Labour's campaign director. "Morgan and the Matts cooked it up," says one aide, referring to the director of communications, Matthew Doyle, and to Matt Pound, a senior adviser at Labour headquarters. "I think Morgan has strengthened his authority as the leader of the Labour party," they add, with a dose of sarcasm.

A friend of McSweeney brushes off the sniping, but doesn't deny that McSweeney's fingerprints are all over it. "It's a reshuffle of his doing but the Labour party is not an autocracy," they say. "Ultimately it was Keir's call. Morgan - like all of us - answers to him."



Campaign director Morgan McSweeney played an integral role in the reshuffle

The focus of the reshuffle was on middle-ranking jobs, with Starmer opting to keep intact his senior team - Rachel Reeves, Yvette Cooper, David Lammy, Wes Streeting and Bridget Phillipson. He also left two big beasts of the soft left - Angela Rayner and Ed Miliband - in high-profile roles.

"It's not a Blairite takeover. It's a balance of experience, talent and ability," says McTernan. "Keeping Ed Miliband in is an acknowledgement that a plane flies with two wings, you need a left and a right. Keir, Angie, Ed, they're all of the soft left."

Rayner is undoubtedly a winner of the reshuffle, having been offered - and having accepted - the levelling up brief, while also managing to hang on to Labour's new deal for working people. Those around Starmer are full of praise for Rayner, who has her own mandate from the party membership, complimenting her "political maturity and growing importance" and flagging how she is "particularly appealing" in focus groups to the "hero voters" - red wall voters who swing directly from the Tories - Labour is focusing on.

The fate of Miliband, the shadow climate change secretary, was the subject of much speculation in the run-up to the reshuffle, amid a new Tory focus on trying to use green issues as a political dividing line.

Yet party insiders insist that Starmer and, in particular, the shadow chancellor, Rachel Reeves, share his view that Labour's £28bn-a-year plan to invest in green industry will be central to the next Labour government's fortunes, with its focus on the cost of living as well as climate targets.

However, there was unease over the demotion of Lisa Nandy, widely valued as one of the party's best communicators, from levelling up to international development.

The political side of the operation has been bolstered, to the relief of supportive internal critics who question Starmer's political instincts. The promotion of Pat McFadden, a former political director to Blair, to national campaign coordinator will bring experience. He will be supported by Jonathan Ashworth, Ellie Reeves and Nick Thomas-Symonds.

One former Labour cabinet minister believes it is "inevitable" that the party will win the next election, unless Labour makes an unforced error. "The government is in meltdown, there's no coming back from this," they say. "Governing parties lose elections, oppositions don't win them."

But Alastair Campbell, a central figure in the New Labour project that won the 1997 election, believes that leaving the Tories to implode won't be enough. "Complacency is very dangerous," he says. "The only way Labour is going to win big is if they fight like they're going to lose. Keir can't win on the back of the government being rubbish."



▲ *Labour's team in London on Tuesday. From left: Angela Rayner, Shabana Mahmood, Keir Starmer, Peter Kyle, Hilary Benn, Rachel Reeves, Darren Jones and Thangam Debbonaire* PHOTOGRAPH: LEON NEAL/GETTY

Sue Gray Partygate investigator joins political fray as Labour aide

Aubrey Allegretti
Political correspondent

When Sue Gray went from being a backroom Whitehall fixer to a household name for her Partygate report, the senior civil servant was so uncomfortable at being thrust into the limelight that, she privately joked to colleagues last year, she had seriously considered changing her name by deed poll.



▲ *Sue Gray's first day in her new job included a photoshoot in her office*

Now, Gray occupies an even more significant role in frontline politics. No longer an impartial official advising ministers, she shocked Westminster by jumping ship to take up a political post as Keir Starmer's chief of staff.

After honouring a six-month break between jobs Gray began her new role this week.

Her first day came on Monday, when MPs returned from summer recess and Starmer overhauled his top team. While insiders said the tone and shape meant it was very much "Keir's reshuffle", they detected - if not her hand in, then her approval of - certain decisions, such as appointing Hilary Benn as the shadow secretary of state for Northern Ireland.

Labour media aides were keen to capitalise on her arrival, and invited one of Westminster's most prolific photographers, the Press Association's Stefan Rousseau, to her office.

However, one cabinet minister said afterwards: "I think that was a mistake. They're effectively saying 'she's part of the story' and it will make her more of a political target."

In what was described as a big morale boost, Gray was unveiled to Labour HQ staff on Tuesday. As well as the polite clapping when Starmer introduced her, there was even said to be "whooping and hollering".

On Wednesday, the most high-profile moment of the week in Westminster took place - prime minister's questions. Gray was part of the cadre of aides that gathered for the final prep session. Insiders said her instincts would prove invaluable in helping skewer Rishi Sunak across the dispatch box.

Gray was clear in speeches to her new colleagues throughout the week that there was a lot of work to do. She will get a honeymoon period, but her real test will come the closer the election looms.



Blue wave

Hosts kick off Rugby World Cup in style



▶ *Emmanuel Macron at last night's opening ceremony*
PHOTOGRAPH: HANNAH PETERS/GETTY IMAGES

Sean Ingle
Paris

Allez les Bleus. On a night when the Stade de France resembled a sweaty mess of nerves and high emotion, France got the Rugby World Cup off to a thumping start with a 27-13 victory over New Zealand.

It was the first time the All Blacks, three-time winners of the tournament, had ever lost a pool match. No wonder France were serenaded off the pitch by nearly 80,000 fans, with a rousing rendition of La Marseillaise.

Not that their players had much energy to celebrate. Temperatures that lingered in the 80s fahrenheit (27C), and the frenetic pace of the game, saw to that.

What made France's victory so impressive was that in the opening half they often veered between the cautious and the robotic. They conceded a try after 93 seconds, fumbled catches, kicked too much, and failed to find much rhythm. Yet in the final 30 minutes their power and panache exerted their will over a side many had regarded as favourites.

This tournament has been billed as the biggest World Cup ever, as well as a celebration of the sport's 200th birthday, and crowds began to gather more than four hours before the 9.15pm kick-off.

The crowd was then whipped into a further frenzy by an opening ceremony designed to promote French "savoir-faire" and "art de vivre", which began with a bicycle-riding baker arguing with a cockerel, before getting progressively weirder.

There were echoes of Danny Boyle's London 2012 Olympics show as actors celebrated around a traditional town square, before dancing around a pop-up Eiffel Tower with the Webb Ellis trophy on top.

As the actors left the stage the crowd began standing, waving tricolours and chanting. Then came the flyover, decorating the Stade de France in blue, white and red, and boisterous cries of "*Allez les Blues*".

Next, the speeches, which were frequently drowned out by the crowd, who needed the stadium scoreboard subtitles to hear World Rugby's chair, Bill Beaumont, say: "It was 200 years ago that our great sport was born, and there can be no better way to celebrate than here in France. The stage is set, the teams are ready. Alors, allons!"

> *'France is hoping to win on the pitch … and the hearts of everyone who has come'*
>
> **Emmanuel Macron**
> *President of France*

France's president, Emmanuel Macron, was initially booed but there was loud applause when he told spectators that "France is hoping to win this World Cup on the pitch but also in the hearts of everyone who has come to celebrate our shared passion", before declaring the 10th edition of the tournament open.

With France also hosting the Olympics next year, concerns had been raised about the security issues at the Stade de France, especially after numerous ticketing and security concerns at last year's Champions League final. Hours before kick-off huge numbers of volunteers were present helping fans, along with a large contingent of police with heavy machine guns.

That helped the preliminaries pass largely without incident, although the crowd were stunned once the action started after New Zealand went ahead barely a minute into the match after a cross kick by Beauden Barrett was collected by Mark Telea.

It didn't help France that their hooker, Julien Marchand, went off early with injury. But only strong defence - and the boot of Thomas Ramos - kept them in the game.

When New Zealand went 13-9 ahead early in the second half, the fans howled their frustration at what they believed was a forward pass in the build up. However, crowd discontent did not lead to French indiscipline.

Instead a try from Damian Penaud put France back in front, while a yellow card for Will Jordan meant that the home side could enjoy 10 minutes playing against 14 men. The momentum had shifted, and there was no looking back.

A further try from Melvyn Jaminet, along with 17 points from the boot of Ramos, sealed victory. And as the final whistle blew, France's players fell to the ground as one triumphant heap.

It is early days, especially given this Rugby World Cup stretches over another 47 matches, but they couldn't have wished for a better start.

Tonight, England will also hope to hit the ground running, against Argentina in Marseille, while Scotland and Wales get their campaigns under way tomorrow.

Home Office told to halt conversion of RAF base to asylum seeker centre

Diane Taylor

A council has told the Home Office to immediately stop building work converting a former RAF base into accommodation for asylum seekers.

West Lindsey district council in Lincolnshire served contractors with a temporary stop notice after a "breach of planning control" at RAF Scampton. The notice was pinned to the gates of the base, formerly home to the Red Arrows and 617 Squadron, which carried out the Dambusters raid in the second world war.

The Home Office hopes to accommodate up to 2,000 people there in what it says will be a cheaper alternative to hotels, where approximately 50,000 asylum seekers are staying at a total cost of about £6m a day.

The council said work preparing the site had broken rules over listed buildings and archaeology. The stop notice refers to "unauthorised development undertaken on the site including but not limited to approximately 4,000 metres of permanent palisade fencing and intrusive surveying works resulting in impact on the four listed hangars, the listed dog's grave and the impending listed officers mess on the site".

It said the breaches related to the installation of fences, "intrusive" surveying works, groundworks and connections to utilities that had "the potential to cause irreversible damage to important heritage assets".

Sally Grindrod-Smith, the local authority's director of planning, said the Home Office "has not provided the necessary information or reassurances".

The notice came as about 15 asylum seekers left another accommodation centre, at RAF Wethersfield in Essex, saying conditions were "unbearable". Their whereabouts were unknown. One told the Guardian yesterday: "I feel like I am a prisoner being held here against my will."

It is understood that officials in Wethersfield raised concerns with the Home Office after 10 asylum seekers left the site this week, reportedly through a hole in the fence. Asylum seekers are not in detention so can leave the site as they wish.

The asylum seeker said five more people had subsequently left and that he estimated only 50-60 people were lef. He said two people were ill with tuberculosis on the site. The Home Office disputed this and said that only cases of latent TB were present.

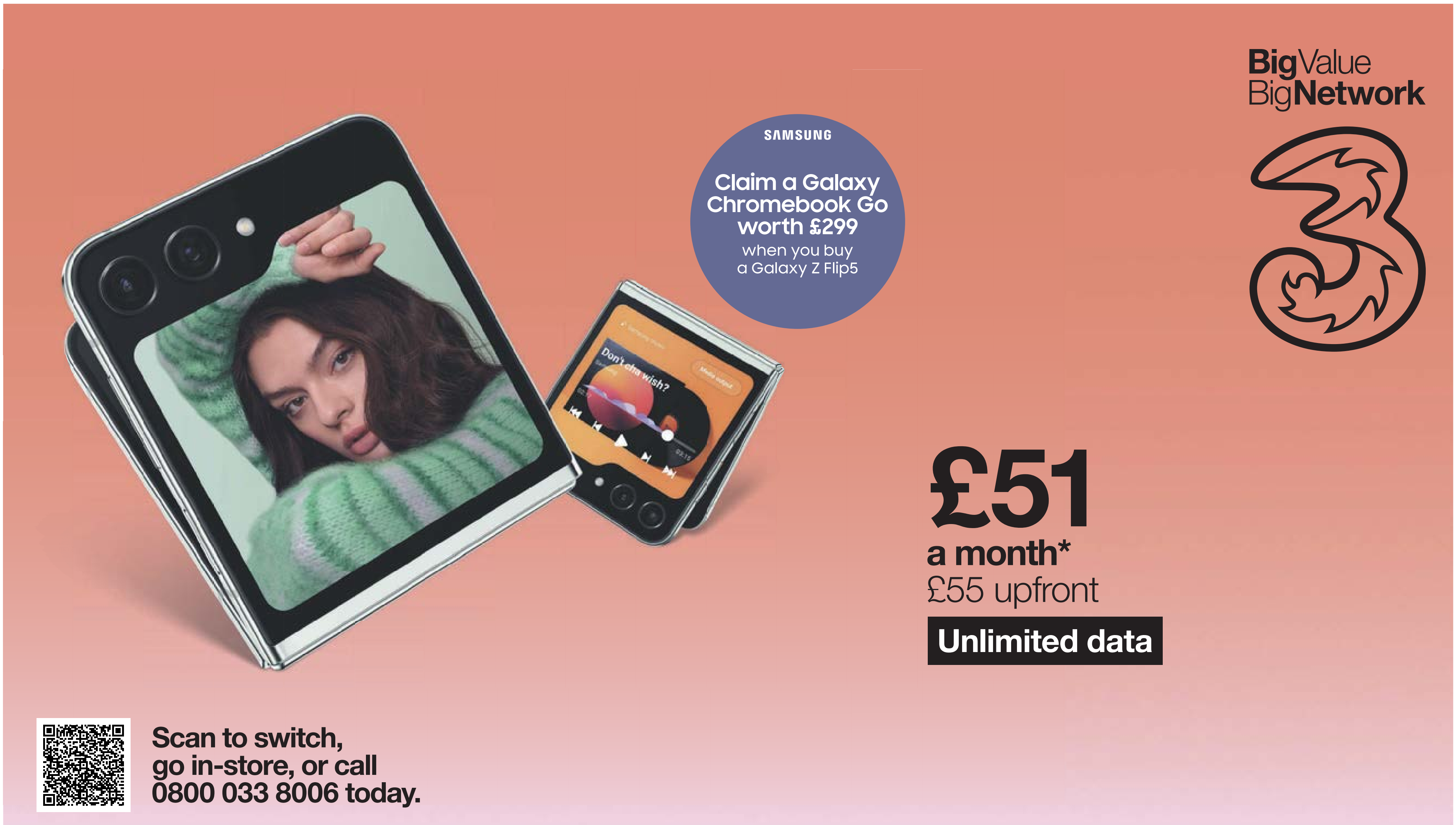
Steve Smith, the CEO of the refugee charity Care4Calais, said: "What asylum seekers are experiencing at Wethersfield is akin to state-sponsored cruelty. They are being kept out of sight behind barbed wire. We are already on the brink of a disaster and the camp is only at 10% of the government's intended capacity."

A Home Office spokesperson said: "Accommodation offered to asylum seekers, on a no choice basis, meets our legal and contractual requirements and they are free to come and go. Delivering accommodation on surplus military sites provides cheaper and more orderly, suitable accommodation for those arriving in small boats whilst helping to reduce the use of hotels. We are confident our project, which will house asylum seekers in basic, safe and secure accommodation, meets the planning requirements."



PHOTOGRAPH: URSULA ARMSTRONG/ MEDIADRUMIMAGES

Heard the one about? A seal captured basking on the sand at Horsey Beach in Norfolk. The unspoilt beach is well known for its sand dunes and spectacular seal colony.



*To get the advertised monthly price you must enter into a Device Plan (credit agreement) for 36 months with a monthly payment of £29pm to finance the device, and a 24 month Unlimited Airtime Plan at £22pm. **From 2024, each April the Airtime Plan monthly charge will increase by up to December's CPI rate + 3.9%.** Airtime Plan monthly charge includes £5 discount for paying by a recurring method such as direct debit. Credit is provided by Hutchison 3G UK Limited at 0% APR for the duration of the credit agreement. Credit is subject to status and a credit check and for 18+ only. If you miss a payment, you may be reported to a Credit Reference Agency, and you may find it more difficult or more expensive to obtain credit in the future. Hutchison 3G UK Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for Consumer Credit, registered office: 450 Long water Avenue, Reading, Berkshire, RG2 6GF. Terms apply. Purchase any model from the Galaxy Flip5 or Fold5 Series by 04/10/23 and trade in any device currently listed by Three UK, to claim an additional payment of £300 on top of the standard trade in value of your device. Max saving of £620 consists of residual value of S21 Ultra (£200) plus trade in boost of £300 and a £120 Airtime saving (£5pm) on 24m Airtime Plan, Airtime offer ends 06/10/2023. Trade-in at three.co.uk/recycle. New device serial number required. Terms at three.co.uk. Claim a Galaxy Chromebook: Purchase a Galaxy Z Flip 5 by 28/09/2023 from a Participating Retailer. Claim by visiting: samsungoffers.claims/perfectpartners within 30 days of purchase. UK/ROI. 18+ only. For full T&C's, See samsungoffers.claims/perfectpartners


As costs fall, so do our prices.
We're passing savings on as fast as we can, wherever we can, and working hard to make your weekly shop more affordable.
Sainsbury's
For more information, visit sainsburys.co.uk/passingonsavings

TV comedy titan and impersonator Mike Yarwood dies aged 82

Nadeem Badshah

Mike Yarwood, the television comedian and renowned impersonator, has died in hospital aged 82, the Royal Variety Charity has announced.

The entertainer was one of the biggest TV stars of the 1970s, famous for his impressions of former prime ministers Harold Wilson and Ted Heath, Prince Charles and the late football manager Brian Clough.

The Mike Yarwood Show in 1977 holds the record for the largest single Christmas Day audience of 21.4 million viewers.

The Royal Variety Charity said it was deeply saddened to announce his death, saying: "He leaves behind an immeasurable void in the entertainment industry."

It added: "Mike Yarwood quickly rose to prominence for his exceptional ability to mimic the voices and mannerisms of countless celebrities and public figures. His talent for impersonation brought smiles to the faces of millions and his unique ability to capture the essence of his subjects made him an icon in the comedy world.

"Throughout his career, Mike graced television screens nationwide, becoming a household name in the 1960s and 1970s. His variety shows, including The Mike Yarwood Show, and Mike Yarwood in Persons, captivated audiences and showcased his uncanny talent for mimicry on prime-time television for two decades.

"Mike's family have asked that their privacy be respected during this sad and difficult time."

Yarwood was born on 14 June 1941 in Bredbury, Greater Manchester, and was a lifelong supporter of Stockport County football club.

He spent his later years at the Royal Variety Charity's Brinsworth House, in Twickenham, south-west London.

"If I see somebody become famous, and they've got tremendously predominant mannerisms and they speak a certain way which is unusual, I go for it right away," Yarwood once said of the public figures he mimicked.

He said he was just six when he did his first impression, stuffing a cushion up his jumper and putting on a pair of glasses to impersonate actor Gerald Campion as Billy Bunter.

The television comedian Kate Robbins posted on X, formerly known as Twitter: "So sad to hear the great Mike Yarwood has died. I was lucky enough to work with him in the 80s. The guv'nor of impressionists. When I was Sarah Brightman to his Cliff Richard we could hardly get anything done for laughing so much. Thanks, Mike. You were always a star to me."

The LBC presenter Iain Dale described Yarwood as "a titan of comedy" and one of the "biggest stars of TV comedy" in the 1970s.

The BBC director-general, Tim Davie, also paid tribute, saying: "Mike Yarwood was simply one of the greats. Part of the golden generation of entertainers that defined television for decades … He was rightly one of Britain's most loved performers and will be hugely missed."

▼ Yarwood with Harold Wilson in 1977. Yarwood's impression of the ex-PM was one of his most popular
PHOTOGRAPH: PA IMAGES



'His shows captivated audiences and showcased his uncanny talent for mimicry'

Royal Variety Charity



Death of Sara Sharif

Family on run a month after girl's body found

Emily Dugan
Haroon Janjua *Islamabad*

When Olga Sharif went to identify her 10-year-old daughter, Sara, at the mortuary she could barely recognise the small battered body dressed in Mickey Mouse pyjamas.

"One of her cheeks was swollen and the other side was bruised," she said in an interview on the Polish television channel TVN. "Even now, when I close my eyes I can see what my baby looked like."

Tomorrow it will be a month since Sara's father, Urfan Sharif, called 999 and told police they would find his daughter dead in his home at Horsell, near Woking, Surrey. Sara had suffered "multiple and extensive injuries" over a "sustained and extended" period, a pathologist found.

A day earlier, Sharif, 41, had boarded a flight to Pakistan with Sara's stepmother, Beinash Batool, 29, his five other children aged between one and 13, and his brother, Faisal Malik, 28. Despite an international manhunt to bring them in for questioning, they still remain at large.

Sara was taken out of school in April to be homeschooled by Batool and was known to social services. There are likely to be questions about what could have been done to prevent her death and a multi-agency rapid review is under way.

Police in Pakistan are understood to be under pressure from the UK to find the fugitives. A new high commissioner, Jane Marriott, is said to be pushing them regularly for results. Officers in Jhelum, where Sharif's relatives live, plan to offer a reward for their whereabouts and to circulate "wanted" posters. Surrey police are also appealing for information to help them piece together a picture of Sara's life.

Police in Pakistan have already raided 20 properties and are under fire for using "unconstitutional colonial tactics" by detaining Sharif's two brothers and brother-in-law to try to force their relatives to come out of hiding.

Sharif's father, Muhammad Sharif, 68, who said he had seen his son, a taxi driver, when he first arrived in Pakistan last month, said he now had "no idea" where they were. "It was an accidental death and I appeal Urfan to hand himself in to the police and fight his case. Police are harassing my family, they have arrested my other sons and son in-law. We are confined in our house and the relatives have abandoned us." He added: "I urge Urfan, Batool and Faisal to hand themselves over to the police. We have nothing to do with the crime."

A neighbour, Muhammad Saleem, said yesterday that Muhammad Sharif had been taken by police to an unknown location to see his son Imran, adding: "Police confiscated their two vehicles to restrict their movement."

Urfan Sharif and Batool appeared in a stilted video released to the media by relatives on Wednesday. Batool was the only one to speak, saying that "Sara's death was an incident" but giving no other comment about her stepdaughter or the circumstances of her death.

▼ Police outside the house where 10-year-old Sara Sharif's body was found on 10 August with 'multiple and extensive injuries' PHOTOGRAPH:





◀ Sara Sharif, left, was taken out of school to be educated by Beinash Batool, below right, seen with her father, Urfan Sharif, in a video sent to broadcasters
PHOTOGRAPH: SKY NEWS



She said: "Our family in Pakistan are severely affected by all that is going on. My main concern is that Pakistani police will torture or kill us, that is why we have gone into hiding." She said her children had no food and that the couple were "willing to cooperate with UK authorities and fight our case in court".

Osama Malik, an international criminal law expert based in Islamabad, welcomed the plan for a reward. "This tactic is certainly better than the unconstitutional colonial tactics the Jhelum police is currently using by detaining Pakistani members of Urfan's family, who have nothing to do with the incident in the UK."

Mudassar Khan, a spokesperson forof Jhelum police, said: "We deny the allegations made by Beinash Batool in her video. Their first such appearance depicts that they are aware police will hunt them soon … They should come up but our three police teams are working on it and have made several raids across Jhelum and Mirpur to get them. We are hopeful that we will arrest them soon."

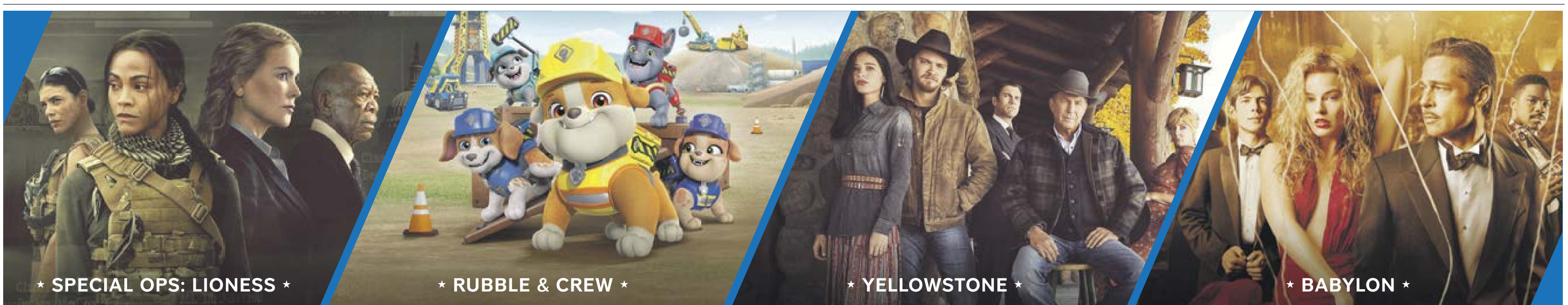
Reports suggest Sara had been seen in recent months wearing a hijab, though other relatives were said to dress in western clothes.

One parent at her former school told the BBC she had been seen with facial injuries the day before she was taken out to be homeschooled. "Just before the Easter holidays she was in school and had cuts and bruises on her face and her neck," said the woman, who gave her name as Jessica. "My daughter had asked what had happened and she said she'd fallen off a bike and then kind of walked away. The next day the teacher announced she had left school and she was being homeschooled."

Sara's Polish mother met Sharif shortly after he moved to Britain in 2001. They married in 2009 and had a son, now 13. When they separated in 2015, their two children lived with Olga but in 2019 the family court decided they should live with their father. Olga still had rights to see the children but said that it had become increasingly hard.

Surrey county council's leader, Tim Oliver, said: "An investigation is under way by Surrey police following the tragic death of 10-year-old Sara Sharif and we are working tirelessly with our safeguarding partners to gain a full understanding of the situation as quickly as possible."

Surrey police said: "Our inquiries remain ongoing through Interpol, the National Crime Agency and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office."



A MOUNTAIN OF ENTERTAINMENT
Stream blockbusters, new originals & hit shows
£6.99/MONTH ★ AD FREE ★ CANCEL ANYTIME
Paramount+
Subscription required. Auto-renews at £6.99/month unless cancelled. 18+. T&Cs apply. Price subject to change.

Leeds fan jailed for assaulting Newcastle manager

Nadeem Badshah

A football fan has been jailed for assaulting the Newcastle United manager, Eddie Howe, during a Premier League match against Leeds United at Elland Road.

David Derbyshire, 35, was handed a 12-week prison sentence and a six-year football banning order at Leeds magistrates court.

During stoppage time of the 2-2 draw on 13 May this year, which was broadcast live on television, the Leeds fan left his seat in the stands, entered the Newcastle pitch-side technical area and had a verbal altercation with Howe.

Derbyshire then pushed the Newcastle manager's left shoulder before being escorted away by security. He was arrested by West Yorkshire police. Leeds later banned Derbyshire for life.



▲ *David Derbyshire (centre) received a 12-week prison sentence and a six-year football banning order*
PHOTOGRAPH: ANNA GOWTHORPE/SHUTTERSTOCK

Derbyshire pleaded guilty on 21 July to charges of entering the playing area at a football match without lawful excuse, and common assault.

Ch Supt Richard Close, who led the policing operation at the match, said: "Criminal behaviour of this kind is completely unacceptable, particularly where club staff or players are targeted during a large-scale sports event such as this.

"We will always treat incidents like this very seriously and we work closely with Leeds United and visiting clubs to fully investigate any offences and take robust action against those responsible, including seeking football banning orders against them."

After the game, Howe told BT Sport: "That was a real surprise. I was concentrating on the game. It was the last thing you think could happen.

"I can't repeat what he said but it makes you think 'what if?'. It was personal to me. I can't remember if he pushed me or not … Moments like that make you think."

Police watchdog apologises 15 years after custody death

Alexandra Topping

The police watchdog has apologised "unreservedly" to the sister of a black man who died in police custody in London 15 years ago.

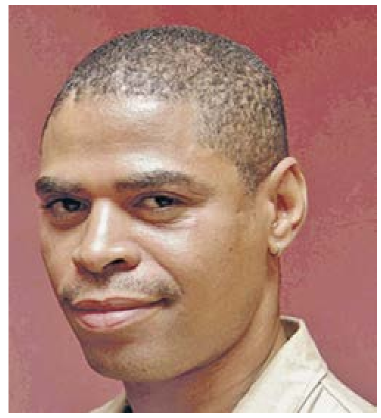
The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) apologised to Marcia Rigg, whose brother Sean died after losing consciousness at Brixton police station, for delays and police failings. She said she hoped that no other family would have to endure her family's "never-ending trauma".

Rigg, 40, who had paranoid schizophrenia, died of a cardiac arrest in 2008 after being restrained by police officers in the prone position. In 2012, an inquest jury deemed the restraint "unnecessary" and "unsuitable" and to have "more than minimally" contributed to his death.

In 2019, five officers involved were cleared of misconduct by a police panel. In May this year, Marcia Rigg learned via a Police Federation news article that three officers involved had secretly received compensation and an apology from the IOPC for delays in the case.

Yesterday, apologising to Rigg on the 15th anniversary of her brother's death, Tom Whiting, the acting director general of the IOPC, said she should have been made aware of the claim.

He wrote: "I am aware we did not inform you following the settlement and you instead learned of it through an article issued by the Police Federation, which we did not know about until after publication. I understand that this caused you and your family anxiety, distress and upset … For that I unreservedly apologise."



▲ *Sean Rigg died in 2008 while being restrained by officers in Brixton*



Eyewitnessed
Pictures of the week



▶ *A pair of Icelandic horses at play as the sun rises over a stud farm in Wehrheim near Frankfurt, Germany*
MICHAEL PROBST/AP





▲ *Stranded cars surrounded by flood waters after Storm Daniel hit the village of Flamouli in central Greece*
STERGIOS SPIROPOULOS/REUTERS





◀ *Buddhist monks punting on the River Cherwell, Oxford, during unseasonable heat this week*
MARTIN ANDERSON/ALAMY



◀ *Maria Paula Quintero of Colombia dives off the 21-metre Stari Most (Old Bridge) in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the fifth stop of this year's Red Bull Cliff Diving World Series*

PHOTOGRAPH: DEAN TREML/ RED BULL/ GETTY IMAGES



▲ *Beyoncé performs at the SoFi stadium in Inglewood, California, as part of her Renaissance World Tour*

KEVIN MAZUR/ WIREIMAGE FOR PARKWOOD



▲ *Labour's Keir Starmer at AstraZeneca in Macclesfield, Cheshire, as the UK rejoined the EU Horizon science scheme*

PETER BYRNE/PA



◀ *Revellers are dusted with powder and paint for New York's carnival in celebration of Caribbean culture*

STEPHANIE KEITH/ GETTY IMAGES

Woody Allen Cheers in Venice despite a fog of accusation that won't lift



◀ *In Coup de Chance, Melvil Poupaud and Lou de Laâge play a married couple whose lives are disrupted when she bumps into a former schoolmate*

Zoe Williams

At the end of the Venice premiere of Woody Allen's Coup de Chance, the audience gave the film-maker a standing ovation that lasted three minutes. He was visibly moved but left the stage after two and a half minutes. Who knows, otherwise, how long it would have gone on for? And was it entirely, or even at all, about the film?

Countering the rapturous response to Allen on the red carpet before the screening was a smaller group of protesters, handing out sheets of paper that urged the festival to "turn the spotlight off of rapists". This took in the whole programme, which also includes films by Luc Besson and Roman Polanski.

Besson was formally cleared of rape in 2023, his accuser barred from pressing any further charges in France or elsewhere in Europe. Several other women have accused him of sexual misconduct anonymously, but no charges have been brought. Polanski, meanwhile, has spent decades of his adult life on the run from US justice, having been found guilty of unlawful sexual intercourse with a minor.

But if all three directors were in the spotlight for protesters, there's a reason why Allen in particular would become his cheerleaders' cause. There is still so much confusion around the terms of #MeToo. Does a man have to be legally convicted before his reputation is torched, or is a rumour enough? How about multiple rumours, and do they all have to say the same thing? Does art come into it at all, or to put that more simply, what happens to the oeuvre of a disgraced artist, is it separable from his disgrace? What about behaviour that was never illegal or non-consensual, but just left a bad taste in the mouth?



◀ *Woody Allen at the premiere of Coup de Chance in Venice, where the film-maker received a standing ovation*
PHOTOGRAPH: LUCA CARLINO/NURPHOTO/

Woody Allen once called himself the "poster boy" of #MeToo, a remark that appeared to spur Amazon's cancellation of a four-film deal (he sued, and the case was settled privately in 2019). He stands by it, elaborating this year:

> **'I've never, ever had a single complaint from [female actors]'**
>
> **Woody Allen**
> *On his 50-film career*

"I've made 50 films. I've always had very good parts for women, always had women in the crew, always paid them the exact same amount that we paid men, worked with hundreds of actresses, and never, ever had a single complaint from any of them at any point." In fact, he may or may not be the poster boy of equal pay, but he's undeniably the poster boy of the sheer social confusion around claims of sexual misconduct, its burdens of proof and its consequences.

To recap: Allen was accused of sexual assault by his adopted daughter Dylan Farrow in 1992. Two investigations subsequently cleared him, but Dylan reiterated the charge in 2014, supported by her brother, Ronan. Another son, Moses, defended Woody Allen, in 2018. A documentary made Dylan's case again in 2021. In the wake of that morass Hollywood and, indeed, the world, has tended to pick a side based on hunches and vibes.

Allen always said that the accusations were orchestrated by Mia Farrow, in retaliation, when she discovered his affair with her adopted daughter, Soon-Yi Previn. That started when she was 21 and he was 35 years her senior. Without question, the relationship gripped the world's attention not as a fun showbiz soap opera but because the whole scenario - the age gap, the Greek tragedy leapfrog from mother to daughter - looked so off.

Since #MeToo, Allen has been cold-shouldered by much of Hollywood, with some actors publicly expressing regret for working with him (though others have come out in support, and plainly he can still readily get films made). Whenever the director talks about #MeToo and attendant concepts such as "cancellation", it cleaves carefully to his professional behaviour, citing the respect and pay parity he carefully maintained with female colleagues.

But he knows that's not really what his cancellation is about: rather, it's about the accusation that hangs over him, a fog that will not disperse.

'Fairytale ending' for school as rare Harry Potter proof sells for £15,000

Ella Creamer

The auction of a rare Harry Potter book found at an Oxfordshire primary school that originally failed to sell has had a "fairytale ending" as the volume was eventually bought for thousands by a local businessman.

An uncorrected proof copy of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone was sold for £15,000 on Thursday after failing to achieve its reserve price when it went up for auction on Tuesday. The new owner - who is from Faringdon, Oxfordshire - plans to display the book in a local museum to attract tourists to the area.

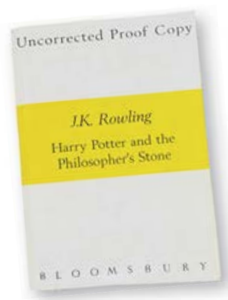
The uncorrected proof features a typo in JK Rowling's name - the title page reads JA Rowling.

It was bought for £1 in 1997 by St Kenelm's primary school at a warehouse sale. "It was not thought to have any value," said Bob Alder, a former headteacher of the school. "However, it was known from press coverage that the story was something special, and to read extracts to the children would encourage them to own their own copy."

First editions were soon purchased by the school, meaning the proof copy was left largely untouched on the shelves.

By 2002, the school realised that the proof - one of only 200 printed by Bloomsbury - may have value owing to the popularity of the book series, and it was stored away. However, in 2015, the copy went missing, and "there was concern it had been thrown away in a clear-out of old paperbacks", said Alder.

The book was found in a tidy-up this summer, and the school decided to put it up for sale. It went under the hammer with a guide price of £15,000-£20,000 but did not reach its reserve. However, post-auction interest was high, and the local buyer agreed to a price of £15,000. The money will go towards helping schoolchildren "develop their love of literature", said Alder.



◀ *The rare proof of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone was bought for £1 in 1997 by St Kenelm's primary*

"I am tremendously happy to have acquired such an iconic and important text and to be able to keep it in the county for others to enjoy," said the buyer. "The main reason for the purchase is to increase visitors to Faringdon."

Jim Spencer of Hansons auctioneers said he had been "incredulous when it didn't spark a bidding battle".

"What I couldn't have predicted was this fairytale ending with the book staying at home in Oxfordshire and being shared with the public," he added.

Lucy Mangan
Diary



Those meteorologists betrayed me just as my poncho arrived

Monday
Now? Now? In September? Now you do it to us, you utter meteorological bastards?! We were so close!

This heatwave is killing me. With the actual heat, obviously, but with the raging unfairness of it all, too. I mean - come on. Summer was over. For all us sun-haters it had been the most perfect, unprecedented washout. We had got all the way to September barely having to remove a cardigan. And in September you can officially relax. Mists and mellow fruitfulness beckon, not sun, sweat and sweltering misery.

And now, just as we push the last fan back into the loft, throw the depilatory equipment to the back of the drawer, and bring out the sweaters in happy anticipation of imminent chills - bam! Here comes the sun. What a brutal, brutal betrayal of us all.

Tuesday
I'm beginning to wish that the Tories had never pushed that Make Metaphors Real button.

Our schools are crumbling. Literally, thanks to the button. Well, also thanks to being built with crappy concrete (I paraphrase, but only slightly) that was discovered about 30 years ago to have a lifespan of … about 30 years.

But - you're hardly going to believe this - virtually nothing was done about it. No, not even when a roof caved in at a Gravesend school in 2018 (over a weekend, fortunately, and no one was hurt, which poses the interesting philosophical question: if a school collapses and no children are killed, does a government need to bother about it at all?)

Enter the education secretary and minister for making a bad situation worse, Gillian Keegan. She gave an interview with ITV in which she noted - for reasons that passeth understanding unless her mind was giving out faster than reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete - that "schools can collapse for many reasons".

And before Keegan was de-miked, she loudly bemoaned people's lack of gratitude. "Does anyone ever say: 'You know, you've done a fucking good job because everyone else has sat on their arses and done nothing?' No sign of that, no." No, Gillian. No. See the entire world after class if you want to know why.

Wednesday
It's National Read a Book Day, is it? Oh, well - go on then, I will! Shall I continue with Lucie Britsch's brilliant Thoughtless, re-read one of that sorcerer Claire Keegan's devastating stories, or do a few pages more of The Mirror and the Light by the late, great Hilary Mantel and try not to think about the book she was writing when she died (a sequel to Pride and Prejudice from Mary Bennet's point of view - the agony of loss is ridiculous and piercing).

I love all these special days there are now for books, reading, literacy (excepting World Book Day because that is now Force Your Parents to Fart Around With Costumes at the Last Minute Day). I was made so unhappy at school because I liked to read that I love to think of a quiet underworld of bookworms being validated and their favourite pastime publicly celebrated.

Such days seem to be part of an effective push over the past few decades to make reading a less damning occupation for children than it was in my day. Apparently you can do it quite openly now - still not too much, obviously - and even talk about things you have read without being instantly punched in the face. Such beautiful progress.

It's strange that it has marched in lockstep with draconian attempts to constrain the consequences. I cannot get my 12-year-old to commit to a heartfelt, truly expressive sentence in an essay. He is too aware and fearful of the marking scheme that counts adjectives rather than measures truth or delights in style. I look forward to the advent of National Write a Thing That Pleases You and Gets No Marks Day.

Thursday
There is of course one thing this late heatwave cannot ruin and that is the summer holidays. Not the school summer holidays, of course - they're awful if you have children and not much better if you don't, because other people's crotchfruit are running amok everywhere regardless of your own contraceptive diligence.

No, I am talking about the two weeks after the children return to school (Raac permitting of course). This is my holiday. The sweet, sweet knowledge, upon closing the door on a departing child at 8.30am, that you have at least seven hours of peace to get on with all the things you need to get on with without being disturbed by requests for snacks, conversations about computer games I could not give a mouse-sized shit about, permissions for in-app purchases ("I need incest points for Paedophile Crush!"), lifts to friends ("Friends?! I didn't have friends till I was 19 and could go and visit them by myself!" / "But Mummy - you were a Sad Case"), more requests for snacks - which do not seem to curtail the need for six full meals a day, and all the other ills that having heirs brings.

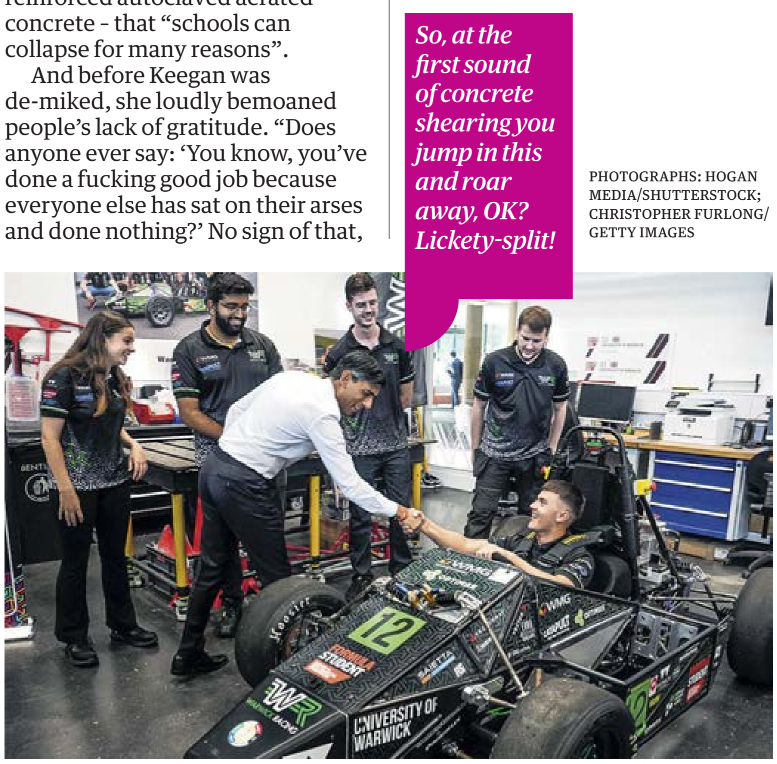
It's not that I'm doing anything fun or relaxing, you understand. I am catching up on work I have missed and all the admin undone (or, my favourite method, done so poorly that it requires redoing in a way that takes 10 times longer than if I had actually been able to do it properly in the first place) over the past six chaotic, unforgiving weeks. But I am doing it alone, uninterrupted and efficiently. It feels enough like a holiday to me.

Friday
My poncho has arrived. I ordered it before the weather turned on me. I clutch it to my bosom as a woolly harbinger of better, colder days to come. And regardless of the conditions without, it marks a happy shift within.

Because I think we can say that when you order and take receipt of a poncho it is an unambiguous - possibly even definitive - sign that not only your poncho but your Poncho Years have arrived. It goes: napping; deadheading roses as you walk past; wanting an affair; laughing at the idea of an affair; wanting a dog; getting a poncho.

If you know, you know. If you don't, you will. PONCHO.





PHOTOGRAPHS: HOGAN MEDIA/SHUTTERSTOCK; CHRISTOPHER FURLONG/GETTY IMAGES

Stage review
Middle-class parents lock horns in this slick satire

God of Carnage
Lyric Hammersmith, London
★★★☆☆

Arifa Akbar

Yasmina Reza's feted satire of two couples locked in passive-aggressive combat inside a tasteful French living room smashed the facade of smugly civilised middle-class life when it premiered in 2008.

Fifteen years later, under Nicholai La Barrie's deft direction, it plays out like a comedy of manners, damning in its portrait of bourgeois parenthood and marriage ("the most dreadful ordeal God can inflict," says a character of the latter) albeit without the feral, growling quality of the original.

Alan (Ariyon Bakare) and Annette (Dinita Gohil) have been invited into the home of Veronica (Freema Agyeman) and Michael (Martin Hutson) to discuss a violent incident between their 11-year-old sons: the former couple's son, Ferdinand, has attacked Bruno with a stick and knocked out two teeth. Rather like Abigail's Party, the minors remain offstage while their parents act like spoiled children.

The play's initial clenched-jaw aggression, and later its savagery, is stylised here so that Annette gesticulates grandly and Michael does an almost exaggerated impression of an easy-going guy. Wealth manager Annette stands awkwardly at attention as the arrogant Alan breaks off to talk urgent business on his eternally buzzing phone.

Using Christopher Hampton's translation, the production seems played emphatically as a French play, with all the formalities in the language left in, including the "madams" and "sirs". Culturally it seems French too, with conversation segueing quickly into philosophical ruminations on life and western civilisation.

The performances - slick across the board - are arch, even hammy, with big, swinging arm gestures and exaggerated movement. This brings heightened theatricality and when racism rears its head in the plotline, there is a sense of remove between characters and actors, given the play's diverse casting. Even Lily Arnold's achingly elegant sitting room gestures at realism but does not quite embody it, with prissy white sofas and a drinks trolley but a sea of abstract black space beyond.

A violin flutters atmospherically at times of rattling tension and a cello rumbles in moments of surfacing rage. There is a certain deliciousness in seeing these characters unravel as they hit the gin and shoot out their pseudo-polite salvos. The play's punches do not land as hard as they might, but there is a clear sense that these self-centred characters have all but lost sight of little Ferdinand and Bruno.



▲ *Freema Agyeman is Veronica in the Lyric Hammersmith production*

Until 30 September

Afghanistan Emergency Appeal

£82 could help provide a lifesaving Emergency Payment for a parent to feed their child.

Afghanistan remains the world's largest humanitarian crisis. Unemployment and food prices have skyrocketed. **Hunger is widespread and many areas are on the verge of famine.**

In the first half of 2023, the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance increased from 28.3 million to 29.2 million, primarily due to new protection needs arising from restrictions on women and girls. A staggering 97% of the population lives in poverty. **Lives are at stake.**

UNHCR is part of the United Nations and is politically impartial, and has the reach and partners to get help to where it's most needed. Teams are operational in Afghanistan and working hard to help displaced people, but relief operations face a serious funding shortfall, and we urgently need more support. Will you help?

A gift of £82 could help provide a family with an Emergency Payment to buy food and other lifesaving essentials.

Emergency Payments are one of the most effective ways to help. The payments support the local economy, are relatively quick and inexpensive to administer and, crucially, allow families like Noor's to prioritise the needs most important to them, whether for food, medicine or fuel.

Noor lives with her four children, including 8-year-old Behtar who is pictured above, in an isolated mountain-top cabin, with pieces of threadbare fabric covering where the doors and windows should be.

Noor used to earn a little money washing clothes, but work has dried up. Like millions of her fellow Afghans, she has run out of options.



Main: Noor's daughter Behtar (8). Below: Noor often doesn't know where her children's next meal will come from.

*Behtar's name, and the names of all individuals, have been changed to help protect their identities.

"With our income, what can I buy? Sometimes my children do not eat for three days because I cannot buy food to cook for them. If we die here on this mountain, no-one will pay attention."

During 2022, thanks to the help of supporters, UNHCR provided humanitarian assistance to around 5.9 million people in Afghanistan, including 1.2 million supported with Emergency Payments.

This year, factors like the conflict in Ukraine have left UNHCR resources desperately stretched, and we urgently need your support.

Despite challenges, more than half a million Afghans have received UNHCR assistance throughout Afghanistan so far in 2023.

Eighty per cent of those receiving direct assistance are women and children. A gift from you today could mean children have hot food to eat, medicine if they are sick, and a safe place to sleep.

Please stand with displaced people in Afghanistan and give what you can.

£82



could help a family buy essentials like food, medicine and fuel.

An example of what families might buy.

GIVE NOW, visit unrefugees.org.uk/afghan-guardian

Call **0800 029 3883**, or fill in the **form** below

I would like to give: ☐ **£82** ☐ **£164** ☐ **Other £** ____________

☐ I enclose a cheque made payable to **UK for UNHCR** OR

☐ I would like to make a donation by debit/credit card

Card no. ____ ____ ____ ____ Expiry date __ / __

Signature ____________ Date __ / __ / __

☐ Tick here, if you don't want to receive an acknowledgement by post

Title First name Last name

Address

Postcode

Email*

Phone*

*Please provide your details to receive updates by email and/or phone on the impact of your support, future appeals and details of the other ways you may wish to help.

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

A minimum of 75% of your gift will directly help displaced families in Afghanistan, funding emergency supplies and other interventions.

United Kingdom for UNHCR is a registered charity in England and Wales (1183415).

Please return this form along with your cheque to:

Freepost UK FOR UNHCR **(you don't need a stamp)**

Increase your donation by 25p for every £1 you donate giftaid it

☐ I would like UK for UNHCR to claim Gift Aid on this donation (currently 25p for each £1 donated), as well as any donations I make in the future and have made in the past four years to UK for UNHCR, until I notify you otherwise. I confirm I am a UK taxpayer and I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand that council tax and VAT do not qualify. If your circumstances change or you have any questions, please contact our **Supporter Care Team** on **0800 029 3883** or email **supportercare@unrefugees.org.uk** The Gift Aid claimed will be used to help fund the whole of the UK for UNHCR's work.

Respecting your personal data: We will use your details to process your donation and to keep you up to date with our work, fundraising activities and other events. You can read more about how we use your data in our Privacy Policy **unrefugees.org.uk/privacy-policy** You can opt out of any communications at any time by contacting our **Supporter Care Team** using the details above.

Today, you could help save a life. Scan now to give online.

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency
United Kingdom for UNHCR

P23AFAGU2

Full of hot air
Companies pull back from carbon offsets
Page 37



Environment



◀ *Geologists, mountaineers and ramblers want Edinburgh's Radical Road reopened. It was closed in 2018*
PHOTOGRAPH: MURDO MACLEOD/THE GUARDIAN

Revolution returns to Scottish path as activists fight for access

Severin Carrell
Scotland editor

A footpath built by Scottish revolutionaries two centuries ago in the royal park beside Holyrood Palace is at the centre of a modern revolt over public access rights.

The Radical Road was laid around the foot of Salisbury Crags, a spectacular basalt cliff that curves around the foot of Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh, by unemployed Scottish weavers who had threatened an insurrection against rapid industrialisation in 1820.

To the dismay of walkers, urban conservationists, geologists and climbers, the path has been closed to the public for five years by Historic Environment Scotland (HES), the agency that manages the park, after rock falls from the crags. It is now sealed off by high fencing and warning signs telling visitors it is closed.

A coalition of groups, coordinated by Ramblers Scotland, has accused HES of unjustifiably restricting access and being extremely slow to produce proposals to safely reopen the path, which it closed on 11 September 2018.

Brendan Paddy, the chief executive of Ramblers Scotland, said the agency should allow walkers and climbers to make informed decisions.

"It is farcical that Historic Environment Scotland has failed to reopen the Radical Road, following half a decade of missed deadlines and broken promises," he said. "HES must immediately stop managing this world-famous geological feature like a crumbling historic building. Residents and tourists should be advised of the risks then allowed to make informed decisions, like everywhere else in Scotland."

Katherine Taylor, the chair of the access society ScotWays, said the path was a legally designated right of way in use long before HES came into being, yet HES had closed it unilaterally. "Despite HES saying there was going to be discussions about it, that has not happened in five years," she said.

The dispute is part of a crisis over how public bodies manage the effects of global heating on popular monuments, with greater rainfall, warmer climates and increasingly turbulent weather destabilising rocks, masonry and the ground around historic sites. In 2018, HES identified Arthur's Seat, which is visited by an estimated 2 million people a year, as one of its sites most at risk from climate damage. Warming conditions help the growth of invasive plants such as valerian, which prise rocks apart.

A public path under cliffs on Edinburgh Castle's volcanic rock – a site also identified by HES as at significant risk, has also been closed off. A costly new wall, fence and nets were installed under the castle by HES.

In its internal assessments about rockfall risks on all its sites, Salisbury Crags had the most red flags. It was closed in September 2018 after about 50 tonnes of rock broke off the crags and fell on to the path; the largest boulder was estimated at 5.5 tonnes.

HES said that between 2017 and 2020, it logged more than 80 rockfalls.

The road, which winds under the crags for three-quarters of a mile, is prized by residents and visitors for its views, and also by climbers and geologists.

It is famed for two sites on the crags that helped James Hutton, the father of modern geology, establish molten rock's role in rock formation.

The Edinburgh Geological Society is unhappy the closure has restricted access to Hutton's sites. Brian Shackleton, the president of Mountaineering Scotland, said its members were unable to use an old quarry at the southern end of the path. It wants HES to produce an access plan.

An appraisal for HES written in 2021 suggested partially or completely covering the cliffs with protective nets; rerouting the path; erecting an alternative cantilevered path, or permanently closing it.

The dispute highlights public funding cuts for the UK's conservation bodies as they wrestle with the costs of adapting to climate changes, alongside routine maintenance.

HES acknowledged that funding was in part an issue in Holyrood park.

"We are working to meet those challenges from technical research on stone decay through to climate risk assessments and how our management approaches need to evolve. This is inevitably a significant resource pressure for HES", it said.

Project seeks to count and save London's 'magic' glow-worms

Patrick Barkham

They were celebrated as "ye country comets" by the poet Andrew Marvell, but glow-worms are defying light pollution and still shining in London.

Now volunteers and enthusiasts are being sought to count and save the much-celebrated but declining beetles, whose females emit a remarkable bright green bioluminescent beam to attract males.

The London Wildlife Trust (LWT) charity is launching a project to better understand where glow-worms (*Lampyris noctiluca*) endure in the capital, alongside a captive-breeding trial that could boost numbers at sites where they are found.

LWT conservationists were surprised when initial research revealed glow-worm strongholds in all corners of the capital. Hotspots include a railway embankment in Hornchurch, east London, the chalk downland of Hutchinson's Bank in Croydon, and other sites in the west London borough of Hillingdon.

"Seeing bioluminescence in London is quite bizarre, it's almost otherworldly," said Mathew Frith of the LWT. "The fact that there is a small but diverse group of animals sharing our world that have the ability to generate light – it's like magic."

The LWT hopes its "wild lights of London" project will identify the beetles' remaining strongholds, with volunteers asked to help search for adults and larvae.



▲ *Glow-worms are under pressure from light pollution and habitat loss*

Glow-worms are under pressure from light pollution, with LED light rendering glowing females invisible to males. Habitat loss has also led to their decline; the beetles favour rough, calcium-rich grassland where there are snails and other molluscs, which the larvae prey upon. Global heating is also a challenge as droughts reduce the abundance of snails.

If the LWT discovers enough larvae, it plans to rear them for release into the sites where they are already found to boost their numbers.

"The bottom line is to get a better picture of their distribution and abundance around London,"said Frith. "We think there are places in London where we should be pushing for less artificial light to benefit glow-worms and other nocturnal species and also give urban people the opportunity to see the night sky."



▲ *A stoneworker in Sylhet takes a sip of water during the severe heatwave that hit Bangladesh this summer*
PHOTOGRAPH: MD RAFAYAT HAQUE KHAN/SHUTTERSTOCK



Life-threatening humid heatwaves will spread rapidly as climate warms, research suggests

Damian Carrington
Environment editor

Life-threatening periods of high heat and humidity will spread rapidly across the world with only a small increase in global temperatures, a new study has found, potentially causing a sharp acceleration in deaths resulting from the climate crisis.

The extremes, which can be fatal to healthy people in six hours, could affect hundreds of millions unused to such conditions. As a result, heat deaths could rise quickly without urgent and serious efforts to prepare populations, the researchers said.

The human body cools itself by producing sweat, which evaporates and takes heat away. But when humidity is high, evaporation is reduced. The new study used a limit based on experiments on people showing that when combined heat and humidity, as measured by so-called wet bulb temperature, passes 31.5C, the body is no longer able to cool itself.

The researchers called this threshold "non-compensable heat stress", as sweating cannot compensate for the extreme conditions. Without cooling aids, such as cold water, fans or air conditioning, death is likely within hours.



▲ *An Iranian taxi driver cools off in a Tehran street as temperatures soar*
PHOTOGRAPH: ABEDIN TAHERKENAREH/EPA

The research analysed data from thousands of global weather stations to show 4% had already experienced at least one six-hour period of this extreme heat stress since 1970, with the frequency of such events doubling by 2020. However, these have been confined to date to hot places including the Gulf in the Middle East, Red Sea and north Indian plain, where people expect extreme heat.

The new analysis, which also used climate models, shows that extreme heat stress will spread rapidly to other regions with global heating of 2C.

> ***'I worry our bodies will be more fragile to small changes than we think'***
>
> **Carter Powis**
> *Lead researcher*

The climate crisis has already raised global temperature by about 1.2C. At 2C, more than 25% of the weather stations would suffer the extreme heat stress once a decade on average.

The east coast and midwest regions of the US and central Europe, including Germany, are among the places that would see the arrival of unprecedented heat stress conditions. In places that are already hot, such as Arizona, Texas and parts of California, periods of extreme heat stress would become annual events at 2C.

The researchers said the absence of mass deaths in places already exposed to the extreme heat shows cooling measures can be effective in preventing deaths. But they said the rapid arrival of these conditions where people have not historically had the need for cool buildings or air conditioning, and were therefore unprepared, was worrying.

"Of all of the different manifestations of climate change, heat is the one that I personally worry the most about and these results have made me more concerned," said Carter Powis at the University of Oxford, who led the study with colleagues at the Woodwell Climate Research Center in the US.

"Everything is OK until it's not and there are limits to what the human body can tolerate when it comes to heat," he said. "Things will keep on chugging along hunky-dory until we pass those limits and then very abruptly, they will not be OK. Suddenly, you'll see an acceleration in mortality. What I worry about is that our bodies and our society will prove more fragile to small changes than we think," Powis said.

"This is just another [study] saying we need to start reducing emissions – but that's what we need to do."

Dr Colin Raymond, at the University of California, Los Angeles, and not part of the study team, said: "Many areas are only slightly below the non-compensable heat level now, so as the planet continues to warm, the total increase in exposure will be exponential.

"We know the broad contours of what's ahead, but not every last wiggle. But the seriousness of the extreme-heat hazard means it is incredibly important to not be caught unprepared, and to treat heatwaves near or above the non-compensable limit like other life-threatening disasters.

"For the most severe events likely in the coming decades, lives will depend on the availability of artificial cooling."

Previous research on extreme heat



and humidity used the maximum theoretical limit of the human body, a wet bulb temperature of 35C, at which even cooling aids cannot take heat from the body. These studies have shown the high vulnerability of people in the Gulf, India and China to extreme temperature and humidity conditions. Globally, scientists have estimated that the climate crisis has already caused millions of premature deaths in the past three decades.

▲ *A firefighter battles a wildfire west of Athens as a heatwave scorches swaths of the northern hemisphere* PHOTOGRAPH: VALÉRIE GACHE/AFP/GETTY

31.5

The wet bulb temperature, in degrees celsius, at which a human body can no longer cool itself



▲ *People in Naples trying to cool off in the sea as temperatures approached 40C in July during the heatwave across Italy* PHOTOGRAPH: CIRO DE LUCA/REUTERS

The new study, published in the journal Science Advances, used the detailed data from weather stations and the broader data produced by climate modelling and found "very good agreement", said Powis, giving confidence in the results.

The researchers concluded: "The geographic range and frequency of non-compensable heat extremes will increase rapidly, given only moderate continued increase in global average temperatures. This implies that, in the near future, a substantial portion of the world's population will be exposed to these non-compensable environmental conditions."

They said there was "a real risk" of "widespread exposure" with "hundreds of millions of people" affected before they were sufficiently heat-adapted to avoid attendant increases in deaths and illness. The scientists were unable to assess Europe and Japan using climate models in this study due to known difficulties in representing high levels of heat in Europe and humidity in Japan.

Powis said that even if adaptation measures to protect health were put in place, extreme heat stress would still prevent many people from working or going outside: "Even in cases where it's not lethal, impacts on quality of life are going to be dramatic."



▲ *Shell has abandoned targets to invest in carbon credits as part of a wider watering down of the oil firm's climate ambitions* PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID MCNEW/GETTY

Shell retreats from carbon offsetting over fear schemes are 'hot air'

Patrick Greenfield
Caroline Kimeu *Nairobi*

Shell has become the latest large company to pull back from carbon offsets amid concerns that many are "hot air", as the Carbon Trust discontinues its "carbon neutral" labelling scheme based on offsetting.

The FTSE 100 oil company, one of the leading proponents of carbon offsetting, abandoned targets to invest up to $100m (£80m) a year in carbon credit schemes and purchase 120m nature offsets a year by 2030.

This move was part of a broader watering down of its climate ambitions in June, the oil firm confirmed.

The decision, first reported in Bloomberg, means Shell joins Gucci, Leon, Nestlé and other firms in moving away from offsets amid repeated warnings that huge numbers of carbon credits do nothing to mitigate global heating.

This year the Guardian published an investigation which found that the vast majority of rainforest carbon offsets were worthless.

Shell said it still supported carbon credits, however, and welcomed efforts to improve their quality.

The Carbon Trust, one of the leading environmental certification schemes, discontinued its "carbon neutral" labelling scheme, which had been based on offsets. A Carbon Trust director acknowledged that consumers could have been inadvertently misled by the labelling owing to poor-quality offsets.

Despite growing scientific evidence indicating that many offsets have no environmental worth, the unregulated voluntary carbon market received strong support this week at the Africa Climate Summit, in Nairobi.

Kenya's president, William Ruto, said African countries got nothing for the carbon sinks that served the world, and unveiled new carbon market regulations in his country before the summit. The US climate envoy, John Kerry, told the conference that Africa and the "global south" would benefit from a growing carbon market.

But at the summit there has been significant concern from environmental campaigners about scaling up carbon markets, and the event has drawn protests, many raising questions about whether those markets helped local communities or stored the carbon as claimed.

The unregulated voluntary carbon market grew to a value of $2bn in 2021 then slumped to $500m this year, according to Barclays. But forecasts have said that the market could reach tens of billions of dollars in the years to come, and help fund climate change mitigation.

In an analyst note this week, the US investment bank Morgan Stanley said that the market was facing a reckoning over quality concerns but that the situation would improve as schemes to improve carbon credit integrity made an impact.

John Newton, a director of the Carbon Trust, noted growing regulation over corporate climate change claims around the world, which he said had prompted the organisation to replace its labels.

He said: "Consumers want more clarity, better explanations, clearer claims and more evidence. We looked at best practice round the world to help our customers to make sure they are ready for future regulations.

"I think, generally companies are quite cautious … about the impacts of [offsets]. I'm not an expert on which offsets are bad and which are good. But obviously if an offset is found to be not helpful, then I think consumers have been misled. If somebody has an offset that's not credible, I recognise that. I can't speak on behalf of every company but from my experience, none of the companies we work with intentionally went and looked for the ones that were risky."

A spokesperson for Shell said: "Shell's position on carbon credits, including from nature-based solutions, remains unchanged. Carbon credits remain a valuable and additional decarbonisation lever in our portfolio, including from nature-based solutions.

"The carbon market may not be perfectly functioning everywhere yet. However, there are ongoing discussions of how it can be improved which we welcome - that is how markets progress."

World

Kyiv condemns ‘fake’ Russian polls in occupied Ukraine territory

Andrew Roth *London*
Shaun Walker *Kyiv*

The Kremlin is holding votes in occupied regions of Ukraine in a process that has been dismissed as "fake elections" and a "sham" by Kyiv and western capitals.

The ballots are aimed at bolstering Vladimir Putin's claims on the occupied areas. Some of the votes concern territories where the Kremlin does not even hold de facto control despite Putin declaring their annexation last September.

The Kremlin is expected to claim a heavy victory in the votes for the pro-Kremlin United Russia or nominal opposition parties.

Ukraine's foreign ministry criticised the votes as "pseudo-elections", called on other governments not to recognise their results and said it would lobby for new international sanctions on all those involved in organising the vote.

"Russia's pseudo-elections in the temporarily occupied territories are negligible. They will have no legal consequences and will not lead to a change in the status of the Ukrainian territories. By organising fake elections in the Ukrainian regions and Crimea, the Kremlin continues to delegitimise the Russian legal system," the ministry said.

The US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, said in Kyiv on Thursday that "Russia's sham elections in occupied areas of Ukraine are illegitimate", and the Council of Europe has called them a "flagrant violation of international law".

Voting for the Russian-controlled legislatures will be held in the Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions of Ukraine, where Russia holds only partial control on the ground. Those legislatures will then appoint local governors.

Ballots are also being held in 50 regions of Russia, including in Moscow where the powerful Kremlin-backed mayor, Sergei Sobyanin, is expected to remain in post.

Ben Noble, an associate professor of Russian politics at University College London, said: "The illegal 'elections' can be seen as an attempt by the Kremlin to demonstrate its control over these territories when that control is challenged on so many other fronts. The intention is to project an image of normality."

He said orchestrating elections was "part of the bread and butter of local, regional and federal governance in Russia, so rolling elections out to occupied territories is also part of Moscow's attempt to establish the Russian way of doing things, including expectations regarding voting and results."

Representatives of the Russian foreign ministry have said criticism of the elections is seen as interference in Russian domestic politics.

Russia's lack of control of the Ukrainian territory was on display again yesterday when three people were killed in a Russian airstrike in the village of Odradakamianka, in the Kherson region. Putin nominally annexed the region last September but the Russian army has since abandoned large swaths of the territory due to a Ukrainian counteroffensive.

Ivan Fedorov, the Ukrainian mayor of Melitopol who is in exile, said on Telegram that there were two explosions at a polling station in the occupied city of Berdiansk.

Askad Ashurbekov, a councillor in Zaporizhzhia city, told Ukrainian television that there were two goals of the so-called elections: to provide propaganda images for internal Russian consumption, and to expose pro-Ukrainian residents of occupied areas, who would refuse to vote.

"The situation is fully absurd. They are posting photographs of members of the so-called 'election commissions' accompanied by armed guards," Ashurbekov said.

Russia has rolled out new technology, including electronic voting, that observers believe will make it easier for the Kremlin to falsify votes.

Ukraine was scheduled to hold nationwide parliamentary elections next month and a presidential election in spring next year, but according to the constitution, elections cannot be held while martial law is in force. There is a discussion in Ukraine over when elections should be held.

Volodymyr Zelenskiy has said there are several problems with holding elections now, including how to ensure those Ukrainians living in occupied territories can vote.

4
Regions of occupied Ukraine where voting for Russian controlled legislatures is taking place



Targets on the Danube

Long-neglected ports become vital gateway for world grain supplies



Emma Graham-Harrison
Reni, Ukraine

It had been hundreds of years since the world paid much attention to the Danube river port of Izmail at the edge of the estuary that now separates Romania and Ukraine. The Russian and Ottoman empires traded blows here in the 18th century, and one epic battle in 1790 was so central to Moscow's concept of its military power that it was glorified in the country's first unofficial national anthem. Then the area slipped back into obscurity, traded back and forth between competing powers, a smuggler's paradise of sprawling wetlands and loosely policed borders.

Until, that is, Vladimir Putin launched a new imperial war and tried to close the Black Sea to Ukrainian shipping. The rusting Soviet-era docks and silted-up shipping channels in Izmail and neighbouring Reni became globally important overnight.

Ukraine produces about 10% of the world's wheat, feeding hundreds of millions of people. These Danube ports, in a historical cultural melting pot known as Bessarabia, are currently the only place its vast harvest can be reliably loaded on to ships for export.

That has revived the dying local economy but also, more than 200 years after the siege of Izmail, put it back in the sights of Moscow's generals, with both ports being hit repeatedly this summer.

"After the first strike people were shocked. The war had come to us too," said Reni's mayor, Ihor Plekhov. "We needed to prepare shelters."

Until then, violence had reached this sleepy borderland only by displacement. Its roads filled up with thousands of lorries headed to the port, and its houses and flats with thousands of refugees from areas closer to the frontline. They all thought their stretch of river was in effect shielded by Nato, because it sits across the Danube from Romania, a member of the alliance. The river is about half a mile wide here, the international border runs down the middle, and a few hundred metres is a narrow margin of error for military targeting.

But Moscow's desire to choke off Ukraine's grain trade apparently sidelined any concerns about triggering an escalation of hostilities with Nato, and in July

Exclusive
Ethiopian troops in 'mass civilian killings'
Page 41

'Parents harass us'
Schoolteachers take a stand in South Korea
Page 45





▶ *A mother at the burial yesterday of her 18-year-old son who was killed by a Russian airstrike on a crowded market in the city of Kostiantynivka, Ukraine, on Wednesday*
PHOTOGRAPH: ALEX BABENKO/AP



◀ *Anti-tank barriers line the Danube. The Ukrainian ports of Izmail and Reni have found themselves in the firing line as Russia tries to disrupt grain exports*
PHOTOGRAPH: EMMA GRAHAM-HARRISON/ THE GUARDIAN

the first missile and drone attacks hit grain warehouses in the port.

The air raids have only intensified since then, and this week Romania confirmed it had found drone debris on its territory.

Russia may even have exploited the border by sending kamikaze drones up the river just inside Ukrainian airspace, Oleg Kiper, the military administration head for Odesa, told the Guardian at the end of August. "They were flying very, very close," he said of early raids, adding that they were just two or three hundred metres from the border at times, making it hard for Ukraine to use air defences.

"We understood if we hit these drones, our weapons and maybe some destroyed parts of the drones could fall on Romanian territory. Maybe Russians wanted to provoke Nato countries or maybe they just did it without any analysis or preparations."

Authorities were braced for more strikes, but also hoping for better protection. "I asked President Volodymyr Zelenskiy to help us with much more air defence for Izmail; we are in touch and normally he responds to our requests."

The stakes couldn't be higher in the fight to keep the ports open. The hunger of millions, the economic stability of many more and the Ukrainian economy all hang in the balance.

Bessarabia may have a place in Ukraine's collective imagination - the central market in Kyiv is named for the region - but got little attention from authorities before last year, Plekhov said. "Bessarabia was always on the edge of Ukraine. The government and the state did nothing to develop Ukrainian identity here, they didn't invest. We couldn't even get Ukrainian-language TV here. We asked for retransmission towers but they didn't care."

'After the first strike people were shocked. The war had come to us too. We needed to prepare shelters'



Ihor Plekhov
Mayor of Reni

Geographically and culturally it could hardly have seemed less prepared, or suited, to replace Odesa - a wealthy cultural and trade hub with a deep Black Sea harbour that handled up to 7m tonnes of cargo a month - as a major logistics hub.

The Danube ports are reached by a single road that veers into Moldova for a stretch, an unofficial "transit corridor" that predates the war. The only bridge that stays inside Ukrainian territory was bombed by Russia.

Border guards on the single-track road count passengers on cars going into and out of this transit zone; men trying to escape conscription regularly jump out of vehicles and vanish on foot.

It's another three hours' slow drive down a single-lane road, past wetlands and lakes, to Reni or Izmail. They have few warehouses for grain, or parking areas for lorries, so the vehicles line up in the thousands along the small country roads, transforming the landscape of reedbeds and sunflower fields into an industrial lorry park.

Reni had been particularly badly affected by the collapse of the Soviet Union, because although the port was larger than Izmail's the railways leading to it came through Moldova. Shipments were choked off by the new border, and river trade dwindled.

On a good month, before 2022, Reni handled perhaps 200,000 tonnes of cargo, and port authorities owed the city millions of dollars in unpaid taxes and fees.

"The port was dying," Plekhov said. Residents, many ethnic Romanians or Bulgarians, often had stronger ties across those borders than to other parts of Ukraine. "The infrastructure was in a bad condition." Larger, better-known Izmail did slightly better.

Then Russia's troops crossed the border, stifling Black Sea trade. "It was like authorities remembered: 'Oh, we have Reni port as well, let's make use of it,'" Plekhov says with a smile. Ukraine's grain traders, big companies and smaller operations, all sprang into action to repair the ports and build new infrastructure. One of the country's biggest companies, Nibulon - whose boss had been killed by a missile strike on his home - built a new terminal in Izmail in three months. The debt to Reni city council was paid off.

Together Danube river ports now handle 3m tonnes of exports, including grain, and large quantities of sunflower oil - shipped out on well-cleaned tankers that bring in fuel.

It is a vital gateway, but less than half of what Odesa processed, and cannot be increased much further, even if Russian attacks don't deter already wary shipping firms.

Vessels reach the river through a dredged channel known as the Sulina canal that emerges into Romanian territorial waters. Its mouth is crammed these days with ships waiting to sail not only to Ukraine, but also to other countries on the river: Hungary, Serbia, Slovakia and Moldova.

"Even now there are lots of vessels are waiting to enter the Danube, from several days to weeks," Kiper said. And when water levels fall, the ports can't handle as much cargo.

"One key problem is the depth of the channel. A few months ago the water line was 1.5 metres higher than it is now." Then vessels could load between 5,000 and 7,000 tonnes; now in lower water they can ship less than half that. Some of that pressure on the Danube will fall away when the war ends and Odesa reopens. But traders expect the new port infrastructure will stay in regular use, bringing an economic dividend that may help reduce smuggling.

It would also strengthen the cultural changes that are binding this borderland more closely to the rest of Ukraine. Ukrainian-language TV has arrived, a statue of the Russian general Alexander Suvorov, who won the 18th-century battle for Izmail, has been removed, and young men and women from the area are dying to prevent his successors returning.

Elon Musk Starlink order was evil, says Zelenskiy aide

Pjotr Sauer

A senior Ukrainian official has accused Elon Musk of "committing evil" after a new biography revealed details about how the business magnate ordered his Starlink satellite communications network to be turned off near the Crimean coast last year to hobble a Ukrainian drone attack on Russian warships.

In a statement on X, the social media platform formerly known as Twitter, which Musk owns, the Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak wrote that Musk's interference had led to the deaths of civilians, calling them "the price of a cocktail of ignorance and big ego".

"By not allowing Ukrainian drones to destroy part of the Russian fleet via Starlink interference, @elonmusk allowed this fleet to fire Kalibr missiles at Ukrainian cities. As a result, civilians and children are being killed," Podolyak wrote. "Why do some people so desperately want to defend war criminals and their desire to commit murder? And do they now realise that they are committing evil and encouraging evil?"

Musk defended his decision, saying he did not want his SpaceX firm to be "explicitly complicit in a major act of war and conflict escalation".

CNN on Thursday quoted an excerpt from the book Elon Musk by Walter Isaacson, which said submarine drones were approaching a Russian fleet near the Crimean coast when they "lost connectivity and washed ashore harmlessly". The biography alleges Musk ordered Starlink engineers to turn off the service in the area of the attack because of his concern that Vladimir Putin would respond with nuclear weapons.

The EU has accused X of allowing Russian propaganda about Ukraine to spread. A study by the European Commission found: "The reach and influence of Kremlin-backed accounts has grown further in the first half of 2023."

Musk yesterday wrote on X: "Where is all this pro-Russian propaganda? We don't see it."



▲ *Elon Musk defended his decision, saying he feared 'conflict escalation'*

Aung San Suu Kyi's life put at risk by denial of medical help, says her son



Aung San Suu Kyi in 2020. She has only been seen in public once since she was deposed in the 2021 coup PHOTOGRAPH: AUNG SHINE OO/AP

Emma Graham-Harrison

Aung San Suu Kyi's life may be at risk because she has such serious gum disease she is struggling to eat, her son has warned, saying he feels powerless to help her.

Myanmar's imprisoned former leader, 78, had not been allowed see a doctor even though she was unable to walk at one point, was suffering from vomiting and dizziness, and may have problems with her wisdom teeth, Kim Aris said.

"Nobody outside the prison has seen her for a long time. Now being unable to eat puts her life at risk. Given how many people lose their lives in prison in Burma, this is of grave concern," he said in an interview from his UK home, using the former name for Myanmar.

In a sign of how serious her condition is, Aris said officers at the jail where she was being held had asked for medical care but that military authorities had refused.

"A request for urgent medical care by the prison authorities themselves has been denied by the military further up the line," he said.

"From what I hear, she's unable to eat due to gum disease and may have wisdom tooth problems, and was unable to walk at one point.



Kim Aris, Aung San Suu Kyi's son, says he 'feels powerless' to help his mother get medical treatment PHOTOGRAPH: GRAEME ROBERTSON/THE GUARDIAN

> *'A request for urgent medical care by the prison authorities themselves has been denied by the military'*
>
> **Kim Aris**
> *Aung San Suu Kyi's son*

He added: "Given her age, this together with vomiting and dizziness gives reason for serious concerns about her overall health."

Aris, who as a teenager collected the Nobel peace prize for his jailed mother, has not been able to contact her since she was detained by the military in February 2021, when it ousted her democratically elected government.

Aung San Suu Kyi has spent nearly two decades under some form of arrest since 1989, but during previous periods of detention Aris said he had been allowed to communicate with her and sometimes visit her.

"Not having any contact whatsoever over the last two and a half years has been tough," he said. "I do feel somewhat powerless."

Before 2010, during her longest period of detention, the military leadership "actually allowed me to go and spend time with her", he said. "[They] allowed us to send care packages and letters, but over the last two and a half years we've had none of those basic human rights."

She has been seen only once since the 2021 coup, in images taken in a courtroom in the capital, Naypyidaw, and is not allowed to meet her lawyer.

In July, Thailand's outgoing foreign minister Don Pramudwinai became the first foreign official to be granted access to her. He said Aung San Suu Kyi was in good health and supported dialogue to resolve the crisis.

Aris dismissed this as "another programme of disinformation" by the military. It would go against the official position of Myanmar's opposition National Unity Government, which rejects dialogue until all political prisoners are released.

He also questioned reports that she had been moved to house arrest.

"They have tried these tactics of appeasing the broader international community by saying that she has been moved to house arrest, which is absolutely not true," he said. "She's still in prison."

Despite her age, Aung San Suu Kyi would have rejected any special treatment because of her political principles, putting her at greater risk, Aris said.

"I cannot say for sure what she is being fed, but I do know that she doesn't accept being treated differently to other prisoners, and they are not being treated well. So we can expect her conditions to be similarly appalling."

Since the coup, the military has struggled to manage fierce opposition to its rule - including an armed resistance - and has resorted to torture, massacres, the torching of villages and airstrikes.

The charges against Aung San Suu Kyi, which include incitement, electoral fraud and corruption, have been dismissed by human rights groups as "fabricated" attempts to diminish her influence in Myanmar.

She is still hugely popular inside Myanmar for her leadership of the fight for democracy ,and as the daughter of the independence hero Aung San, though her international reputation was tarnished after 2015, when she was widely accused of being apathetic or complicit in the plight of Rohingya Muslims.

Her detention has been widely condemned. The UN security council passed a resolution in 2021 calling for Aung San Suu Kyi's release and an end to violence.

In August the military handed down a partial pardon, which reduced her sentence slightly, so she now faces 27 years in jail - meaning she would be released aged 105. Aris dismissed it as an attempt to improve the regime's international standing, and called for his mother to get treatment.

"I appeal to the military to release my mother, or at the very least agree to her being urgently treated by her doctor," Aris said.

"The world can no longer turn a blind eye while letting the military continue their now well-documented brutality against their own citizens with impunity. The country is in a worse state than at any point in my life."

The junta spokesperson Maj Gen Zaw Min Tun did not answer when called by the Guardian.

British man accuses Philippine drugs agency of false charges

Margaret Simons

An internationally respected British public health consultant, who has been in Philippine jails for more than two years on what he says are fabricated drugs charges, is taking on the country's main drug enforcement agency with allegations of fabricated evidence, theft and corruption.

Sixty-year-old Elden Chamberlain had been due to open his defence in the regional court in the city of Cagayan de Oro on Thursday in a case with the potential to highlight previous allegations against the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) during the country's notorious "war on drugs".

In affidavits to be presented to the court, Chamberlain and defence witnesses allege that drugs were planted in Chamberlain's home, that police have lied and tampered with evidence, and that officers stole food and money.

However, the case did not proceed, and the hearing was delayed until 19 October.

Allegations of fabricated charges and human rights abuses have been raised before against the PDEA, which is under investigation by Philippine congressional and senate committees amid allegations that its officers have themselves been trading in drugs.

The agency is also at the centre of an international criminal court investigation over at least 12,000 killings during the so called "war on drugs", in which the former president, Rodrigo Duterte, encouraged the shootings of drug addicts.

Chamberlain was first charged in September 2019. He had just returned to the Philippines from work in Thailand as the chairman of an Australian-Thai HIV organisation. He visited an HIV positive drug user who owed him money in the Manila suburb of Makati and walked into a PDEA operation. The authorities said they found methamphetamines and gamma-butyrolactone at the apartment. Chamberlain was charged with operating a drug den.

Chamberlain will present CCTV evidence that he says shows he was sitting alone in Starbucks at the time he was alleged to have been administering drugs.

A British citizen raised in Australia and now a permanent resident of the Philippines, he has spent 30 years working in HIV/Aids advocacy in south-east Asia.



Elden Chamberlain first faced charges in the Philippines in 2019



▲ Amhara militia fighters. The Fano militia group was allied to federal troops but is now battling them
PHOTOGRAPH: EDUARDO SOTERAS/AFP/GETTY

Ethiopian soldiers accused of killing 70 civilians in conflict with regional militia

Lucy Kassa

Ethiopian soldiers have killed more than 70 civilians and looted homes in a region hit by escalating violence between state forces and a local militia, multiple witnesses have claimed.

The alleged killings took place in Majete, a rural town in Amhara, after two weeks of heavy fighting between federal troops and the Fano, an Amhara militia.

The alleged atrocities occurred after Ethiopian troops occupied the town last week. Survivors said the victims were unarmed farmers.

"As soon as the federal soldiers swept into the town, they conducted house-to-house searches," said a 29-year-old woman whose two younger brothers were killed.

"They came to our village in late afternoon. They asked me and my family where we hide our weapons and threatened us to [make us] hand over the weapons to them.

"We told them that we are innocent farmers and we don't have weapons. When they found no weapon after searching the house, they rounded up my two brothers alongside the younger men of our village and shot them all in the head."

Fighting between the government and the Fano, who were allies in the war in Tigray that ended in November, erupted last month after the prime minister, Abiy Ahmed, announced plans to dismantle regional paramilitary forces and absorb them into the national army. The Fano militia refused to surrender its weapons.

The government declared a nationwide state of emergency on 4 August. Since then reports have emerged of air strikes and civilian casualties across the north-eastern region.

Amnesty International has called on the Ethiopian authorities to grant independent investigators and the media unfettered access to Amhara to look into alleged human rights violations during the state of emergency.

"My uncle was an elderly farmer with no association to the Fano militia," said a 35-year-old mother of three who fled her home town after witnessing the killings.

"The federal soldiers looted our livestock and killed my uncle together with other neighbours, who were also innocent farmers.

"They carried out the killings and looting, saying it is the farmers who are feeding the Fano militia fighters."

One farmer described how the federal troops looted all his property during a house-to-house search.

The 62-year-old said: "The soldiers of Abiy Ahmed mercilessly took all my cattle, the food grains I stored, and fertiliser. When I begged them to leave at least a few of my cattle, they slapped me in the face. They also looted cattle from other farmers."

A 49-year-old mother of five said her husband had been shot in front of her. "Terrified by the news of killings we received from our relatives in nearby villages, we were sitting in our house locking the doors when the federal troops arrived," she said tearfully.

"I hoped they would pass our house when we did not answer their knock. But they broke in and became angry when they found us inside. They questioned my husband, [asking] if he is a Fano militia member hiding from them.

"My husband tried to explain that he is a civilian and begged them not to kill him. But the soldiers did not listen. They shot dead my husband in front of me. Then they said to me to bury him, kicking his dead body as if he was not a human being."



▲ Ethiopian troops are terrorising villagers, survivors have said

Other survivors shared similar testimonies of federal soldiers terrorising villagers, accusing them of supporting Fano and hiding fighters and weapons in their homes.

"They threaten residents to give them information about the Fano militia. They threaten people to confess if they have any family members who joined the Fano militia group," said one Majete resident.

"I am living in fear. Every hour the federal soldiers came to search houses or stop me for interrogation; I am very scared that they will arbitrarily kill me."

Marta Hurtado, a spokesperson for the UN commissioner for human rights, last month expressed concern about the deteriorating situation in Amhara, where at least 183 people have been killed since July.

Last month at least 26 people were reportedly killed by a drone strike in the town of Finote Selam.

In a statement, Hurtado confirmed reports of house-to-house searches taking place in Amhara since early August. "We call on all actors to stop killings, other violations and abuses," she said.

The European Union and the US have expressed concern over the fighting in Amhara and reports of human rights abuses.

The federal army and the Fano militia, as well as Eritrean troops, have been accused of crimes against humanity during the Tigray war, including ethnic cleansing, torture and sexual violence.

The Ethiopian prime minister's office was approached for comment.

Dozens killed by Islamist militants in twin attacks in northern Mali

Jason Burke
Africa correspondent

Al-Qaida-linked militants have killed at least 64 people in twin attacks on an army base and a crowded passenger boat on the Niger River in northern Mali.

Extremists from the Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) appear to have targeted the boat on the river near Timbuktu and an army position at Bamba, in the northern Gao region, with "a provisional toll of 49 civilians and 15 soldiers killed", a government statement said.

The assaults on Thursday were claimed by JNIM, which was formed from a series of local al-Qaida affiliates six years ago, and will refocus attention on the strategically important but unstable Sahel region.

Mali has suffered a surge in violence since a military takeover in 2021 and is now one of the countries worst-hit by extremism in the central Sahel, which is the region of the world most affected by terrorism, according to recent figures compiled by the Institute for Economics and Peace, a global thinktank.

A series of military coups across the Sahel has overturned democratically elected governments in the past two years, leading to the withdrawal of western troops from several.

In Mali, a large French military deployment has been replaced by a much smaller force of Russian mercenaries from the Kremlin-linked Wagner group. Civilians have suffered the most, both from Islamist militants and in often indiscriminate government offensives.

The Niger River is a vital transport link in a region where roads are poor and there are no railways. It is unclear what form the attack on the passenger boat took, but its operator, Comanav, said the vessel, plying an established route between cities along the river, was targeted by at least three rockets aimed at its engines. It is thought the boat might have sunk rapidly or the rockets may have started a lethal fire.

The attack came after another al-Qaida-linked faction, the Support Group for Islam and Muslims (GSIM), announced last month that it was blockading Timbuktu, the crossroads city of northern Mali. There have also been attacks on villages by Islamic extremists in the central Mopti region.

Much of the violence in Mali is driven by the rivalry between Islamic State in the Greater Sahara and JNIM, the two main extremist groups. "The government of Mali watches from a distance the confrontations between Islamic State in the Greater Sahara and Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wal al-Muslimin," a recent UN report said.

Additional reporting **AFP**

Georgia report reveals jury called for more charges over bid to overturn 2020 election

Sam Levine
New York

A special purpose grand jury in Georgia that investigated Donald Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election recommended bringing criminal charges against several people who were not charged.

Included in the report was the US senator, Lindsey Graham, former senators David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler, as well as the influential conservative figure Cleta Mitchell.

The jury also recommended indicting Michael Flynn, Trump's former national security adviser, Lin Wood, a lawyer who spread claims about election fraud, and Boris Epshteyn, a top Trump aide.

Those recommendations were revealed yesterday when the special purpose grand jury's final report was unsealed. A regular grand jury last month indicted Trump and 18 others over their efforts to overturn the 2020 election. Those charged include Rudy Giuliani, Mark Meadows, Sidney Powell and the former Georgia Republican party chairman David Shafer. The special purpose grand jury recommended bringing charges against 39 people.

The panel was selected in May last year in order to assist Fulton County district attorney, Fani Willis, in her investigation. It issued its final report on 15 December 2022. Unlike a regular grand jury, a special purpose grand jury can issue subpoenas, but not indictments. A regular grand jury issued indictments against Trump.

> *'It's not a short list … there are no major plot twists waiting'*
>
> **Emily Kohrs**
> *Foreperson on grand jury*

The special purpose grand jury recommended bringing charges against Graham, Perdue and Loeffler "with respect to the national effort to overturn the 2020 presidential election with efforts focused on Georgia, Arizona, Wisconsin, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and the district of Columbia".

Graham, a key Trump ally in the Senate, called the Georgia secretary of state, Brad Raffensperger, after the election and inquired about tossing aside legally cast mail-in ballots. He has denied wrongdoing and disputed Raffensperger's recollection of the phone call. After unsuccessfully fighting the special purpose grand jury's efforts to have him testify, Graham testified before the panel last year. A spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Perdue reportedly pushed the Georgia governor, Brian Kemp, to call a special session of the Georgia legislature in order to overturn the election results. Loeffler initially said she would vote against certification of Biden's win in the US Senate before reversing course after the January 6 riot and voting in favour of certification.

Mitchell, who remains an influential figure on the right today, was on the January 2021 phone call in which Trump asked Raffensperger to find votes in his favour. The special purpose grand jury unanimously recommended indicting her under several Georgia statutes, including those that outlaw interfering with performance of election duties, criminal solicitation to commit election fraud, false statements, and using pressure to influence an official proceeding.

The Conservative Partnership Institute, where Mitchell is a senior legal fellow, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Emily Kohrs, who served as the foreperson of the grand jury, signalled that the panel had recommended a long list of people to be charged earlier this year. "It's not a short list," she told CNN in February, months before Trump was indicted. "I will say that when this list comes out, you wouldn't - there are no major plot twists waiting for you."

Spanish women tell stories of workplace sexism



◀ *The World Cup kiss highlighted the issue of power imbalances in many Spanish workplaces*
PHOTOGRAPH: BRUNA CASAS/REUTERS

Ashifa Kassam
Madrid

More than 200 women from across Spain have anonymously shared their personal experiences of sexism or abuse of power in the workplace, as the reckoning sparked by Luis Rubiales's unsolicited kiss spills into other spheres of Spanish society.

Since mid-August Spain has been in the grip of a national conversation over sexism in football after the Spanish federation president grabbed the player Jenni Hermoso by the head, pulled her towards him and planted a kiss on her lips at the World Cup medal ceremony in Sydney.

While Rubiales initially dismissed critics as "idiots and stupid people", there was a clamour for change within Spanish football. People declared *Se Acabó*, meaning "it's over", as the football federation pulledsupport for Rubiales, the coach of the women's national team was sacked, and Hermoso filed a criminal complaint accusing Rubiales of sexual assault.

Helena Legido-Quigley, a professor at Imperial College London, wondered if there was more to be said. "I thought this is our chance," she said. "When we talk to each other, most of us have experienced something like what happened to Jenni, but people are very scared to talk."

Working with members of Women in Global Health Spain, Legido-Quigley put out a call on social media. "We've all felt we can identify with Jenni Hermoso," she wrote as she invited women in academia and healthcare - the two fields in which she works - to anonymously send in their experiences.

Five days later, more than 200 stories had poured in. "I was completely shocked," she said. "What happened to Jenni has really created a moment for women to start sharing their stories."

The uproar over Rubiales's behaviour, as well as the applause and standing ovation given to him by members of the federation after he railed against "false feminism", shone a spotlight on the deep sexism that continued to exist in some Spanish institutions.

The women who contacted Legido-Quigley detailed behaviour from lewd comments to inappropriate touching and sexual assaults. "Most of them said, 'I'm just going to share two or three stories from the many that I've had,'" she said.

Most had never reported the incidents, citing reasons that ranged from fear to not knowing how to do so. Some did mention them to colleagues or their superiors, only to have the incidents dismissed as part of what women were expected to put up with in the workplace.

While the incidents may have happened in a flash, the ramifications often lasted a lifetime. "In several cases they said it destroyed their careers," said Legido-Quigley. Others spoke of the psychological harm. "Some said that they were sharing this for the first time. They hadn't even told their partners."

Legido-Quigley and Women in Global Health Spain plan to analyse the responses and explore solutions implemented in other countries that could help protect Spanish women.

"I think what this says about Spanish society is that what we call micromachismos are normalised. So these comments about women, about the way they look, there is this kind of humour, it's normalised behaviour. Women feel uncomfortable but they don't dare to highlight it because of power [imbalances]," she said.

What was clear already was how the prevalence of precarious jobs had worked to silence women's voices, particularly in academia. "It's important to understand the context, academia is very precarious, there are very few positions. So I think they prey on this precarity," she said.

"I think this is a #MeToo moment for Spain, but we are not ready to give names and shame institutions. That's the key difference. Because people are really scared of losing their jobs."

"In other fields Spain has been very progressive," Legido-Quigley added, highlighting the recently passed consent law as an example. "But I think when it comes to the workplace, we need to think of new ways for women to feel safe. We need a safe environment where women can report this and be listened to."

Luis Rubiales
Prosecutor files complaint

A prosecutor has filed a complaint with Spain's high court against Luis Rubiales, citing concerns that there could be grounds to charge the football chief with sexual assault as well as coercion after he planted a kiss on the lips of the footballer Jenni Hermoso.

The complaint filed yesterday, days after Hermoso made a criminal complaint accusing Rubiales of sexual assault, requests that the court place him under formal investigation. It can then decide if charges are warranted.

"[Hermoso] also stated that she and her immediate family suffered constant and repeated pressure from Luis Rubiales and his professional entourage to justify and approve what happened," the complaint noted, according to El País. Hermoso said the incident had left her feeling "vulnerable and a victim of aggression". She said the kiss was an "impulsive act, sexist, out of place and without any type of consent from my part".

Rubiales, 46, sought to portray the kiss as consensual. Nearly a week after the incident, he was provisionally suspended by Fifa and ordered to refrain from contact with Hermoso and those close to her. Days later, as uproar continued over the kiss as well as Rubiales grabbing his crotch as *La Roja* won the Women's World Cup, the federation demanded he resign.

Earlier this week the federation issued a statement apologising for the "enormous damage" caused by the actions of its president. He has yet to step down. Ashifa Kassam

'Close to the edge': rescuers aim to free sick American from Turkish cave

Peter Beaumont

Local and international cave rescue teams were poised to begin an attempt to evacuate a sick American caver from a deep underground system in Turkey, in what experts are suggesting may be one of the most complex operations of its kind.

Turkish-led rescuers have said the operation to bring up 40-year-old Mark Dickey by stretcher could take up to four days, and will require constant monitoring of his health.

Dickey fell ill with gastrointestinal bleeding more than 1,000 metres (3,300ft) below ground level in the Morca cave system on 2 September, but it took until the morning of 3 September to notify others who were above ground.

An Italian team including medical personnel reached the experienced expedition caver and instructor on Thursday night and managed to stabilise him. His fiancee and fellow caver, Jessica Van Ord, was at his side and remained with him while he was unwell, but began climbing out of the cave as his condition improved.

Dickey made a video that was brought to the surface in which he thanked the more than 150 rescuers trying to get him out of the system.

"The caving world is a really tight-knit group, and it's amazing to see how many people have responded on the surface," Dickey said. "I do know that the quick response of the Turkish government to get the medical supplies that I need, in my opinion, saved my life. I was very close to the edge."

Rescue teams are being assigned different sections of the cave system. They will have to navigate extensive vertical roped sections, rugged underground terrain and narrow tunnels. Poor communications will require the use of runners. The best hope is that Dickey can be brought to the surface over the weekend.

Yesterday, footage showed rescue teams setting up tents and cables outside the sinkhole. "This is a difficult operation. It would take a (healthy) person 16 hours to come out," Cenk Yildiz, a regional official from Turkey's disaster relief agency, told the IHA news agency. "This operation will last at least three or four days. Our priority is health. Our aim is to conclude this operation without anyone coming under any danger."

Yildiz's comments were echoed by the Turkish caving federation, which described the formidable effort involved. "The operation is logistically and technically one of the largest cave rescues in the world," the federation said.

Dickey, who was bleeding and losing fluid from his stomach when he fell ill, has stopped vomiting and has eaten for the first time in days, according to a New Jersey-based cave rescue group he is affiliated with. The New Jersey Initial Response Team said the rescue would require many teams and constant medical care.

In the video, Dickey can be seen standing and moving around in the video, but said that while he was alert and talking, he was not "healed on the inside".

Cavers use abseiling techniques to descend vertical sections, but navigating the return to the surface requires a far more strenuous technique to climb the ropes using clamps, which appears unlikely to be a viable option for Dickey given his physical condition.

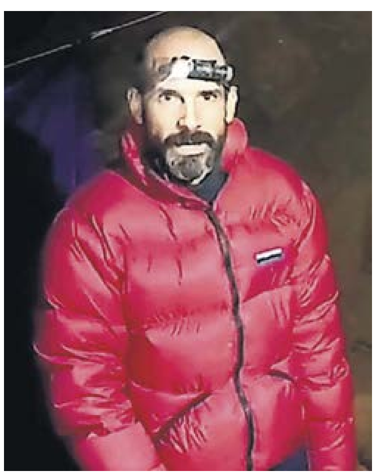
Also complicating the effort is the fact that fixed ropes in caving expeditions do not always follow straight lines, angling around obstacles, waterfalls and loose rock.

"This will not be a quick rescue due to where he is in the cave and the challenging terrain ahead," said Gretchen Baker, a representative of the National Cave Rescue Commission in Huntsville, Alabama.

The European Cave Rescue Association has indicated that Dickey will need to be hoisted out of the system, requiring more complex rope-hauling systems to be installed so that rescuers can winch him from the top of vertical systems while other rescuers accompany his stretcher.

The Turkish federation launched the rescue operation with the help of Turkey's emergency response service on Tuesday, with several international teams assisting.

"Mark's condition is becoming stable," the federation said. "His bleeding has stopped and he can walk with help, but it is not possible for him to get out without a stretcher."



▲ *Mark Dickey, 40, seen in a video that was brought to the surface*



▼ *Relief in a boat as volunteers wade through floodwaters in the town of Palamas, near the city of Karditsa*
PHOTOGRAPH: ANGELOS TZORTZINIS/AFP/GETTY



◀ *A drone view at sunrise of the flooded village of Piniada, near Trikala, in the Thessaly region*
PHOTOGRAPH: ACHILLEAS CHIRAS/EPA

Hundreds stranded by floods in central Greece

Helena Smith
Athens

Helicopters and lifeboats have been deployed to rescue hundreds of villagers stranded by flood waters in central Greece after rainstorms killed at least 10 people.

Touring the crisis-hit area of Thessaly, 185 miles north of Athens, Greece's prime minister, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, vowed to do "whatever is humanly possible" to assist people in areas deluged by torrential rain that also hit neighbouring Bulgaria and Turkey. A total of 23 people have died in the three countries since the onslaught began on Tuesday.

"I understand your anger and fury," Mitsotakis said yesterday. "Damages will be recorded immediately and those who have suffered will quickly see relief [from] the state."

The Greek leader described the downpours, which saw more than a year's worth of rainfall dumped on central Greece in 24 hours, as the most powerful weather event the country had ever experienced.

Cars, buildings, bridges and roads have collapsed, or been washed away, with satellite imagery depicting vast tracts of the Greece's agricultural heartland submerged by muddy silt.

"I have never seen anything like it in my life," Stavroula Brazioti, 104, told the state-run ERT TV. "We've gone through wars, hardships, hunger, but we haven't drowned."

Officials said that in some areas floodwaters were over 2 metres deep, raising fears that the death toll could rise amid concerns that many may not have had time to evacuate homes. Thousands of animals are also thought to have perished.



▲ *People are evacuated in Palamas as rescue operations continue apace*

"I don't think we have realised the magnitude of this disaster yet," Prof Efthymios Lekkas, Greece's leading natural disaster expert, told state-run TV. "The agricultural production isn't destroyed just for this year. The thick coat of silt means it is no longer fertile," he said of a region that is one of the country's major breadbaskets.

Although the storms had abated, residents in the central city of Larissa spoke of a situation that had become increasingly "dangerous" yesterday after the River Pineios burst its banks. Local people told media outlets water levels in several suburbs were rising "by the minute", with those trapped expressing anguish that they were running out of food, water, medicines and other essential supplies and were at risk of being flooded as night fell.

"Great care should be taken as the flooding could intensify at any moment," warned the climate crisis and civil protection minister, Vassilis Kikilias, late yesterday, saying four people remained missing in the city of Volos and the Pelion peninsula.

Elite commando units have been dispatched to oversee rescue efforts that have seen about 1,800 people saved. Yesterday dozens of tourists were also rescued. Residents were seen on camera being hoisted on to helicopters from the roofs of homes; elderly villagers were rushed to safety in dinghies. An operations centre has been set up by the centre-right government to coordinate rescue efforts and restore power and running water.

Villages were expected to remain submerged for days, with the Greek fire brigade – which only earlier this week extinguished a huge fire that had raged in the northern Evros region for 17 days – due to continue door-to-door searches for survivors.

Greece is on the frontline of the climate crisis. The flooding follows a summer described as the hottest on record, with temperatures exceeding 47C, and hundreds of wildfires erupting on soil turned tinder-dry.

Fallon 'says sorry to TV show staff' after toxic workplace allegations

Sian Cain

Jimmy Fallon has reportedly apologised to staff on The Tonight Show after current and former employees alleged that there was a toxic work environment behind the scenes of his late-night programme, according to Rolling Stone.

Fallon is reported to have told staff during a brief Zoom meeting: "It's embarrassing and I feel so bad. Sorry if I embarrassed you and your family and friends. I feel so bad I can't even tell you.

"I want this show to be fun, it should be inclusive for everybody, it should be funny, it should be the best show, the best people," Fallon was reported by Variety and Rolling Stone as saying during the call on Thursday.

Rolling Stone published allegations from two current and 14 former employees, including production crew and writers, who requested anonymity for fear of retaliation. The magazine claimed it had approached an additional 80 current and former employees, but "not a single one agreed to speak on the record or had positive things to say about working on The Tonight Show".

According to Rolling Stone's report, a number of sources alleged Fallon had a history of "outbursts" and lashing out at staff when under pressure; that previous senior staff on the show had bullied and belittled them; and that guests' dressing rooms were commonly known as "cry rooms", where employees could go to let out their stress.

> *'Everyone walked on eggshells. You never knew if he was going to throw a hissy fit'*
>
> **Former employee**
> *The Tonight Show*



▼ *Jimmy Fallon had a history of lashing out at staff when under pressure, according to Rolling Stone*
PHOTOGRAPH: ROSALIND O'CONNOR/NBC/GETTY

Nine showrunners have worked on The Tonight Show since Fallon took over from Jay Leno in 2014 - a much faster turnover than other late night shows such as Late Night With Seth Meyers and The Late Show With Stephen Colbert.

One former employee told Rolling Stone: "Nobody told Jimmy 'No'. Everybody walked on eggshells, especially showrunners. You never knew which Jimmy we were going to get and when he was going to throw a hissy fit. Look how many showrunners went so quickly. We know they didn't last long."

Another former employee said: "It was like, if Jimmy is in a bad mood, everyone's day is fucked. People wouldn't joke around in the office, and they wouldn't stand around and talk to each other. It was very much like, focus on whatever it is that you have to do because Jimmy's in a bad mood, and if he sees that, he might fly off."

Fallon's representatives declined to respond to Rolling Stone. An NBC spokesperson told the magazine: "As in any workplace, we have had employees raise issues; those have been investigated and action has been taken where appropriate."

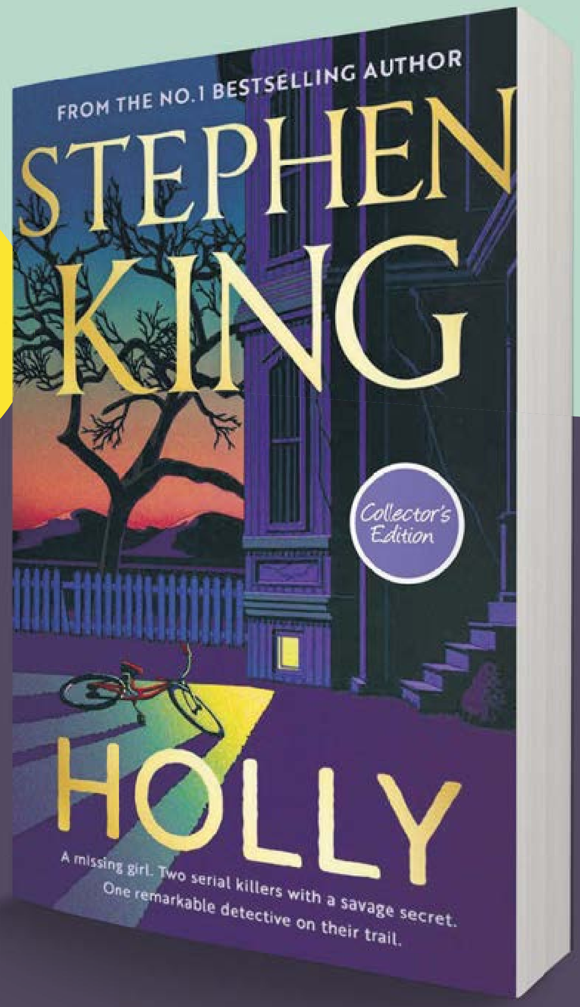
Representatives for Fallon and NBC have also been contacted by the Guardian for comment.

G Handpicked reads

Supernatural mayhem

In Holly, his 66th novel, the master of macabre Stephen King reintroduces one of his most compelling and ingenious characters: Holly Gibney. When the Finders Keepers detective agency agrees to investigate the disappearance of a young girl, they are led to an unholy secret harbouring in the basement of an elderly couple. But what are they hiding - and is it linked to the crime?

Better than half price £11.50



Get the book for better than half price at £11.50 (RRP £25) in WHSmith stores using this voucher or online using code 60875112

6087 5112

Terms and Conditions: This voucher entitles you to one copy of 'Holly' by Stephen King (9781399712910) for £11.50 at WHSmith. Full RRP £25. Voucher valid ONLINE at www.whsmith.co.uk and IN-STORE from Saturday 9th September. Voucher expires on Friday 22nd September 2023. TO REDEEM ONLINE: add the product to your basket and apply the voucher code 60875112 in the promo code box. Cannot be used in conjunction with any other promotion codes. Offer excludes delivery costs. Full T&Cs available at www.whsmith.co.uk/terms. UK stores only. Offer excludes stores at airports, railway stations, motorway service stations, hospitals, garden centres and workplaces and Books by WHSmith at Selfridges, Harrods, Fenwicks and Arnotts. This voucher cannot be used in conjunction with any other promotional voucher or discount card. Only one voucher can be redeemed per transaction and it must be surrendered on use. No cash alternative. Photocopies will not be accepted and the voucher is not transferable. Vouchers that have been forged, defaced or otherwise tampered with will not be valid for use. Subject to availability.

WHSmith EST·1792 | The Guardian



▼ *A protest in Seoul for teachers' rights. The placards read: 'Revealing the truth is the way to pay respect'*
PHOTOGRAPH: JUNG YEON-JE/GETTY IMAGES

'We are suffering' South Korea's teachers stand up to unruly parents

Raphael Rashid
Seoul

Park Seo-yoon* says South Korea's teachers know why a young primary school colleague killed herself after being subjected to abuse from parents. "We've all had similar struggles," she says.

"We've all received late-night calls from parents accusing us of disrespecting their precious children because they were disciplined for not participating in class," says the elementary school teacher. "We've had parents yell at us for not providing extra materials to students who didn't bring their own, or complaining about giving three sentences of praise to one student but only two to another."

Teachers across South Korea have been protesting this week at their growing frustrations over the abusive treatment they say they receive from both parents and students, including being accused of child abuse for disciplining students. They are calling for better protection for themselves.

The teachers' movement was sparked by the death of a 23-year-old elementary school teacher in July. She was found dead at her school in Seoul in an apparent suicide after reportedly expressing anxiety over complaints from abusive parents.

Thousands walked out of their classrooms on Monday to mourn her and colleagues who have killed themselves, and to demand change. The government has promised to "thoroughly take care of" enhancing teachers' rights, but protests are likely to continue until key reforms are made, such as a bill granting teachers immunity from child abuse claims, and their authority is restored.

Yesterday, news emerged of another elementary school teacher killing themselves, having suffered from malicious complaints from parents in the past, according to a teacher's union.



▲ *Mourners visit a memorial to the Seoul teacher who apparently killed herself after abuse from parents*
PHOTOGRAPH: JUNG YEON-JE/GETTY IMAGES

South Korea's education system is known for its high pressure and hyper-competitiveness. Good grades and prestigious university degrees are regarded as critical for securing good jobs. As a result, students devote a significant amount of energy to university entrance exams, which can demand long hours of study and substantial financial investment in private tuition. Pressured by such expectations, some turn unruly or develop poor mental health.

For another middle school teacher, who wished to be referred to only as "B", the nightmare began when students returned to classes following the pandemic, when remote learning was the norm.

When students regularly failed to bring their materials to the class, even after multiple reminders, B resorted to making those students stand during class. This did little to encourage them to participate in the lesson; rather, she says, some students disrupted the class.

A parent complained about the punishment, leading to B being accused of emotional abuse. She claims she was suspended without a proper investigation.

B felt unsupported by the school administration and authorities, and put under pressure to take sick leave. She says she faced threats of being removed from her position, and endured a lengthy legal battle.

"After over a year, the judge ruled in my favour. However, the education authorities still imposed disciplinary measures. This resulted in wages not being paid in full, a forced school transfer, and a missed promotion," B says.

"I still struggle with emotional distress and anxiety disorders resulting from this traumatic event. My physical health has also deteriorated," B says, claiming that "so many other teachers are suffering."

> *'Parents see any criticism of their children by teachers as a direct insult'*
>
> **Kim Ji-soo**
> *Elementary level teacher*

The outcry from teachers is a desperate plea for their right to survival to be guaranteed, B says, hoping that practical changes will be implemented.

"I fervently hope that no other teachers will have to endure the injustices that I have, or feel compelled to take their own lives."

The education ministry has vowed to prohibit parents from directly contacting teachers with complaints by introducing new processes. It also plans to lobby to amend laws to better distinguish legitimate teacher guidance from child abuse, and to make students and parents uphold teachers' rights.

Starting this week, anyone who calls a teacher will be informed that their conversation may be recorded. The Korean Federation of Teachers' Associations has welcomed government efforts but is urging MPs to legislate to "allow teachers to engage in educational activities with peace of mind".

Park recounts an incident involving a hearing-impaired student who was receiving abuse from another student in her class. Park intervened, urging the offending student to stop, and ultimately issued a reprimanded.

The fallout was unexpected. Park received a phone call from a parent of the disciplined student that night, who accused her of "favouring students with disabilities". A formal complaint was lodged with the school and the parent transferred their child to another school.

"The principal said I should have been more kind. I began to question my role as a teacher," she says.

Kim Ji-soo*, who teaches at elementary level, believes parents have come to view teachers as mere service providers due to the teacher evaluation process – in which parents have a role – and the expansion of private education.

"With families now having only one or two children, parents live a child-centred life. They see any criticism their children receive from teachers as a direct insult.

"They ask the teacher to apologise [for alleged wrongdoings] and then record it and let their children hear it. If they don't like a teacher, they file complaints under the child abuse law," Kim says.

"This problem has been neglected for too long, leaving us stripped of our authority."

** Names have been changed. Samaritans can be contacted on freephone 116 123, or email jo@samaritans.org*

Business

UK's energy auction secures no new offshore windfarms

Jillian Ambrose
Energy correspondent

No new offshore windfarms will go ahead in the UK after the latest government auction, in what critics have called the biggest clean energy policy failure in almost a decade.

None of the companies hoping to build big offshore windfarms in UK waters took part in the government's annual auction, which awards contracts to generate renewable electricity for 15 years at a set price.

The companies had warned ministers repeatedly that the auction price was set too low for offshore windfarms to take part after costs in the sector soared by about 40% because of inflation across their supply chains.

The government's "energy security disaster" means the UK may miss out on billions in investment and may also push up bills for hardworking households, the Labour party warned.

Up to 5 gigawatts of offshore wind was eligible to compete, which could have powered nearly 8m homes a year. That would have saved consumers £2bn a year compared with the cost of using electricity generated in a gas power plant, according to the industry group Renewable UK.

The government confirmed yesterday that only 3.7 gigawatts of new clean energy projects secured a contract, in a significant blow to the UK's clean energy targets.

The winning projects include solar farms, onshore windfarms, the first geothermal schemes and a record number for tidal power. However, the absence of giant new offshore windfarms will make the UK's climate targets far more difficult to achieve.

Industry insiders said the three offshore wind developers - SSE, ScottishPower and the Swedish company Vattenfall - were forced to sit out the bidding after ministers refused to heed their warnings.

The industry warnings intensified after Vattenfall said in July that it would cease working on the multibillion-pound Norfolk Boreas windfarm because rising costs meant it was no longer profitable.

Keith Anderson, the chief executive of ScottishPower, said: "This is a multibillion-pound lost opportunity to deliver low-cost energy for consumers and a wake-up call for government. We all want the same thing - to get more secure, low-cost green offshore wind built in our waters," Anderson said. "But the economics simply did not stand up this time around."

Ed Miliband, Labour's shadow energy secretary, said: "The Conservatives have now trashed the industry that was meant to be the crown jewels of the British energy system - blocking the cheap, clean, homegrown power we need. Ministers were warned time and again that this would happen but they did not listen. They simply don't understand how to deliver the green sprint, and Rishi Sunak's government is too weak and divided to deliver the clean power Britain needs."

> *'They were warned this would happen. They didn't listen'*
>
> **Ed Miliband**
> *Shadow energy secretary*

The government has been criticised for its record on green energy policy, which has included blocks on onshore wind, the solar industry, and low levels of home insulation.

Greenpeace described the outcome of the latest auction as "the biggest disaster for clean energy policy in the last eight years" because it risked jeopardising the UK's plan to triple its offshore wind power capacity by 2030, and cast doubt on Britain's climate targets.

Richard Sandford, the co-chair of the Offshore Wind Industry Council, said lessons must be learned so future auctions can bring forward new offshore windfarms. "It's clear that this year's auction represents a missed opportunity to strengthen Britain's energy security and provide low-cost power for consumers," he said.

"Our plans to accelerate the growth of this innovative sector in the years ahead remain ambitious and undimmed. We will continue to work with ministers to build up a world-class domestic offshore wind supply chain around the UK, creating tens of thousands of jobs and attracting billions in private investment."

Solar power made up half of the clean energy capacity to win at the auction. Almost 1.5GW of onshore wind capacity secured a contract, the tidal power sector secured a record capacity of more than 50MW. There were also three winning projects for geothermal power for the first time.



Out of puff What went wrong?

Why did no offshore wind developers bid?
None of the UK's biggest offshore wind developers took part in the auction after many complained to ministers and officials that the maximum price had been set too low. The auction awards a 15-year contract to the projects that bid the lowest price for the clean electricity they go on to generate. This has helped to drive down the price of renewable energy, but in recent months spiralling inflation has caused costs across the industry to rise.

Why is offshore energy more expensive now?
Until recently, offshore wind was considered Britain's cheapest source of electricity. But since then the industry has faced a double economic blow that has compounded costs. First, the cost of building and installing wind turbines has rocketed because the price of materials has risen sharply due to the energy crisis. Then, the cost of borrowing money to finance the multibillion-pound projects has climbed in line with global interest rates. The Swedish energy company Vattenfall estimates its costs have climbed by about 40%.

What will the impact be?
The auction's outcome risks creating a domino effect of failed climate targets, billions in missed investment and higher energy bills.

First, it poses a significant risk to the UK's plan to triple Britain's offshore wind capacity to reach 50GW by 2030, or enough to power the equivalent of every home in the UK. This in turn risks derailing Britain's plan to establish a "net zero" electricity system by 2035. The UK's legally binding pledge to be "net zero" across the economy could also become impossible to reach by 2050. In the shorter term there is likely to be a blow to the UK's green economy by upending the offshore wind supply chain, which was expected to create more than 100,000 new jobs by the end of the decade.

We are also likely to see higher home energy bills. The industry trade group, RenewableUK, said the lost windfarms could have saved consumers £2bn a year compared with the cost of using electricity from gas power plans - equivalent to £24 on the average annual household bill.
Jillian Ambrose

Analysis
Nils Pratley



The shift in the economic breeze was obvious months ago, so why didn't ministers accept it?

The developers weren't bluffing about the rising cost of building offshore windfarms. They had warned for months that they wouldn't pitch to build turbines in the North Sea on the terms the government was offering, and they did what they said they would do. No bids were received in this year's auction for new projects. The auction was a flop.

There are two big questions here. First, how did the government, which maintains that it is committed to hitting its target of 50GW of offshore capacity by 2030 (more than treble today's level), seemingly fail to see this result coming? Second, what's the plan now?

FTSE 100	All share	Dow Indl	Nikkei 225	£/€	£/$
+36.47	+19.14	+89.80	-384.24	1.1652	1.2486
7478.19	4072.74	34590.53	32606.84	-0.0002	+0.0008



◀ *Windfarm turbines off the south coast. Grant Shapps, below, who as the energy secretary had refused to budge on the bid price*
PHOTOGRAPH: GEOFF SMITH/ALAMY



£44
The maximum price per megawatt hour the government placed on bids in the latest windfarm auction

On the first score, there can be no excuses. Companies always have a lobbying interest in screaming about cost pressures, but the difference this time was that the line rang true. Long-term financing costs have obviously surged with the rise in interest rates in the past 12 months, and supply chain inflation is everywhere from steel to transport. Setting a maximum price in auction of £44 per megawatt hour always looked vulnerable to ending up with no takers.

The writing was on wall when the Swedish developer Vattenfall halted work on a big project off the coast of Norfolk that was a winner in last year's auction. The company reckoned it was cheaper to take a financial hit of £415m, covering the work it has done so far on the Norfolk Boreas development, than carry on. Companies do not take such decisions on a whim.

Grant Shapps, who was the energy security secretary until last week, reacted to the looming crunch by fiddling around the edges. He refused to budge on the £44 maximum but added to the pot of money available to write contracts at that price. From the developers' point of view, they were being offered more of what they didn't want. The tweak was never going to alter the economics.

A more generous interpretation is that ministers consciously played hardball and accepted the risk of a failed auction in the hope that prices settle down in time for next year's event. That, at least, would have a superficial logic. Yet the practical problem is that any imagined "saving" will probably be consumed by the need to catch up to try to save the 50GW target. The developers' negotiating hand has just improved for the next auction.

The future approach is now the issue. Yes, after several rounds of "record low" auctions over the past decade, it's a shock to discover that offshore wind prices can rise as well as fall – there will be an effect on consumer bills. But sticking with gas is hardly an appealing alternative, whatever net zero sceptics may say about hidden costs of remodelling the electricity grid to cope with more intermittent supplies. Even allowing for such system costs, offshore wind still looks more competitive than gas on current 15-year projections, which is the life of these price contracts.

Nor, despite the expansion of onshore wind and solar within this auction round, does either technology offer an alternative to offshore's big turbines. A balanced renewables strategy means doing the lot, but offshore has always been intended to be the workhorse.

The energy consultancy Aurora calculates that to meet the 50GW by 2030 goal the government would have to procure 10GW of offshore capacity in the next two auction rounds, given the time it takes to build a large offshore windfarm. That's a tall order.

"Stopping and waiting for 12 months is not easy. You've got £400m of capital in the balance on one of these big projects and you're trying to go back through the supply chain and renegotiate contracts and shift delivery slots," said the chief executive of one big developer. It was doable, he added, but another flop really would bring the offshore show to a halt.

The government said it would work with industry to retain the sector's leadership. That's an ambition as opposed to firm policymaking. The first step – bad news for all of us – is to accept that the economic breezes have shifted and that offshore wind, while still cheaper than the alternatives, is not as cheap as it was. But that uncomfortable fact of life, as ministers should have accepted, was obvious months ago.

Merger talks between Make UK and CBI stumble over pensions

Rob Davies

Merger talks between the scandal-hit Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and the manufacturers' trade body Make UK have been delayed by concerns about the business lobby group's pension scheme, according to reports.

The CBI, the UK's largest corporate lobbying organisation, has been in discussions with Make UK about a tie-up, in an unexpected twist to its efforts to recover from sexual misconduct allegations revealed by the Guardian.

Yesterday, it emerged that the CBI's pension scheme may be an obstacle to the proposed combination, which could help the CBI repair finances damaged by the flood of businesses that cancelled their memberships after the claims surfaced.

The pension scheme is in surplus but will have to be hived off, probably to an insurance company, according to the Financial Times, which first reported the stumbling block that threatens to derail the merger.

The CBI is understood to be yet to find an insurer willing to take on the scheme's liabilities. "It's not that there's a problem with the regulator, it's just that these things take time, and the CBI doesn't have time," someone close to the talks told the FT.

The CBI and Make UK said "positive and constructive" merger talks had taken place but were at an initial stage.

The CBI is understood to be under pressure to find a solution in short order, given the pressure on its finances caused by the membership exodus. It is unclear whether it would retain the CBI brand, described as "broken beyond repair" by one business leader in April, after any tie-up with Make UK.

Rain Newton-Smith, who took over as director general in April and is overseeing an overhaul of the group's governance, has said that a rebranding would be a necessary part of attempts to rebuild trust.

The CBI's fight for survival comes after it was plunged into crisis by reports in the Guardian about alleged sexual misconduct at the business lobby group that led to a police investigation. Allegations included a claim of rape at a staff party.

Dozens of companies paused or cancelled their CBI membership in light of the allegations and the lobby group found itself frozen out of industry meetings with the government.

Aldi plans expansion as it becomes 'first-stop shop'

Zoe Wood

Aldi is increasingly shoppers' first-choice supermarket for their weekly shop, its boss has claimed, as soaring food costs lead to Britons changing their buying habits and prioritising value "like never before".

Giles Hurley, the chief executive of Aldi UK and Ireland, said shoppers were increasingly using it as their "first-stop shop".

The discounter has traditionally been seen as a "top up" destination because it stocks just 2,000 products, with consumers then heading to mainstream rivals that stock 40,000 products and all the big brands for the bulk of their groceries.

However, with the cost of living crisis into its second year, Hurley said this pattern was changing. "In the last 12 months, we've welcomed 1.1 million new customers and … we've also seen existing customers consolidating their shop with Aldi. There's no doubt that consumers are prioritising value like never before."

This was partly because people saw the opportunity to save money by buying supermarket own-label products. "Now when you think 90% of what we sell is Aldi exclusive label, we're clearly beneficiaries of that decision-making," Hurley said, as he used the launch in Woking of its 1,000th UK store to set out an ambitious plan for another 500.

The expansion plan goes against the prevailing wisdom in the industry and follows a series of milestones for the fast-growing business. Last autumn Aldi became the UK's fourth largest supermarket chain, ejecting Morrisons from a "big four" lineup that had remained roughly the same for nearly 20 years: Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda and Morrisons.

Then in April Aldi's market share hit 10% for the first time. It is still on a roll as the fastest growing supermarket in the UK, according to the industry analyst Kantar, which tracks grocery sales.

The run of success has given it confidence to invest in the UK. "We can see very clearly that there are communities across the UK who only have access to high-priced groceries because they're served by a traditional full-price supermarket or by their very expensive convenience arm," said Hurley.

The soaring cost of food has led to accusations of "greedflation" - pushing up prices beyond cost rises to increase profits - in the food industry. As inflation starts to cool, all eyes are on the direction in which prices are going on the supermarket shelves.

1.1m

Number of new customers Aldi's chief executive says the retailer has attracted in the last 12 months

Aldi will pass on "as many savings as possible when they become available", said Hurley. This week it pushed through price cuts on a dozen products, including cheese, which equated to an investment of £3.5m. "I'm optimistic between now and Christmas that we can build on that and that there'll be more price reductions," he added.

As in previous downturns the appeal of Aldi and the fellow discounter Lidl has grown and their strong performance has forced the major players to compete more aggressively. Tesco and Sainsbury's have schemes that match Aldi prices on hundreds of products, while they have accepted a profit hit to keep prices down. Both say the price gap with Aldi UK has significantly narrowed.

The two biggest supermarkets now use loyalty card offers - Clubcard and Nectar respectively - to pull in shoppers, but Hurley said they did not pose a threat.

"I actually see now more than ever that our very simple, honest pricing is a unique competitive advantage," he said. "When you come shopping at Aldi, you don't need to join a club, you don't need to hand over personal information. There's no smoke and mirrors. It's just very simple pricing."

Heathrow loses appeal against order to cut fees

Mark Sweney

Heathrow will have to cut passenger charges by almost a fifth next year after losing an appeal to the UK competition watchdog.

The London airport had hoped to raise the fees it charges to airlines to fund baggage handling, security and other costs, which are set by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

In March, Heathrow was told by the CAA that it must cut the charges by about 20% next year, after airlines convinced the regulator to reassess its original proposals supporting an increase.

The airport made an appeal to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) over the decision, which it described as "making no sense".

However, in a provisional ruling, the CMA said that while the regulator had "made some errors" that needed to be revised, they would not significantly change the level of charges.

The CAA had ruled that travel was expected to return to pre-pandemic levels from 2024 and therefore "should benefit passengers in terms of lower costs".

Airlines, which had lobbied hard after the CAA initially proposed charges closer to Heathrow's demands, had also lodged an appeal with the CMA, saying that the level remained too high.

While charges will remain the same for 2023, the average maximum per-passenger fee will drop from £31.57 this year to £25.43 in 2024, and will stay broadly flat until the end of 2026. Heathrow had pushed for an increase to more than £40 a passenger.

A spokesperson for Heathrow said: "We are carefully considering the CMA's initial findings to understand what impact they may have on passengers and our ability to deliver our investment plans."

While passenger numbers trebled in 2022, Heathrow made an adjusted loss of £684m compared with a loss of about £1.3bn the previous year. It forecasts it will reach 83% of 2019 passenger levels this year.

The CMA will publish its final decision on the appeals against the CAA's per-passenger charges on 17 October.



Striking a pose in Italy Jessica Chastain in a T-shirt supporting the actors' strike at the Venice film festival, where the actor was promoting the film Memory with its director, Michel Franco.

PHOTOGRAPH: GUGLIELMO MANGIAPANE/ REUTERS

Value of grocery delivery firm Getir down 75% in latest funding round

Julia Kollewe

The grocery delivery service Getir is reportedly now worth just a quarter of what it was valued at 18 months ago, after a big shakeout in the sector amid declining consumer demand.

The Istanbul-based company is raising $500m (£400m) in a funding round that will value the business at $2.5bn and is expected to close later this month, according to a Financial Times report citing people familiar with the matter.

It had been valued at up to $11.8bn when it raised funds in March 2022, but its valuation was slashed to $6.5bn in a funding round in April. Despite its reduced valuation, Getir's new funding is among the biggest deals this year.

The FT reported that the money had come from existing shareholders including the Abu Dhabi wealth fund Mubadala Investment Company, the venture capital firm G Squared and the investor Michael Moritz, who recently quit Sequoia Capital after almost four decades at the California venture capital group.

Getir announced 2,500 job cuts across five countries last month as demand waned in the delivery market. The cuts amount to more than a tenth of its 23,000-strong workforce and affect couriers, pickers and office employees in the UK, US, Germany, the Netherlands and Turkey.

Getir pulled out of Spain, Italy and Portugal after the cost of living crisis hit demand for rapid deliveries of groceries, while costs have also gone up. Demand for grocery delivery boomed during the pandemic but dropped after lockdowns ended.

Since being set up in 2015, Getir has grown into one of the largest of more than a dozen delivery app companies, but most of its rivals have been sold or closed down. Those that remain have tightened their operations, laying off riders and selling warehouses.

As well as competing with Gopuff and other fast-track specialists such as the UK's Zapp, Getir also faces a growing threat from Uber Eats, JustEat and Deliveroo, which have begun delivering groceries. Tesco, Sainsbury's and Ocado also operate their own rapid delivery services - Whoosh, Chop Chop and Zoom.

Money hacks
How to make cash by selling your clutter
Page 52

Fantasy house hunt
Warehouse-style apartments for sale
Page 53



Money



▲ *Passengers wait at Heathrow after a breakdown in the air traffic control system caused disruption*
PHOTOGRAPH: ALBERTO PEZZALI/AP

Travel How to get cash back after summer flight chaos

Zoe Wood talks to experts about what you could receive if your flight is delayed or cancelled, or your entire trip is ruined

This summer a catalogue of human-made and natural disasters has wreaked havoc with the nation's travel plans, with last month's UK air traffic control meltdown - which caused more than 2,000 flights to be axed - the coup de grace.

Last year's chaos was a hard act to follow after ground staff shortages led to the cancellation of thousands of flights. Yet 2023 obliged and, over the past few months, Britons have experienced cancellations and delays caused by extreme weather at home and abroad as well as strike action in other countries, among other problems.

The holiday season got off to a rocky start when a technical issue forced British Airways to cancel nearly 200 flights going into the late May bank holiday weekend. Then, in June, easyJet cut more than 100 Gatwick flights owing to thunderstorms. Even more of its customers were affected when, in early July, the airline scrapped 1,700 summer flights.

It got worse still. By the end of July, British tourists were trapped in a "living nightmare" after wildfires in Rhodes and parts of southern Europe caused chaos. Tui, Jet2 and easyJet were among the companies to cancel trips.

The final straw was the UK air traffic system failure that affected hundreds of thousands of passengers, including many families on their summer holiday.

While a lot of this has been beyond the control of the airlines, many travellers complain that they are making a difficult situation worse with practices such as overbooking. This is when more seats are sold than there are on the plane, and it is now happening on short hops with budget carriers such as Ryanair, as Patrick Collinson reports on p50.

If your travel plans were affected - for example, you were hugely delayed or had to shell out on new flights or pay for additional hotel or other costs - you are probably poring over the small print of your airline documents and travel insurance policy.

Here we look at what you might be entitled to, and how to get it.

£220
Minimum compensation if a short-haul flight is delayed by more than three hours and the airline is to blame

1,700
Number of flights cancelled by easyJet in early July because of air traffic control problems

Delayed or cancelled?

If your flight was delayed or cancelled and you used a UK- or EU-based airline, then you are entitled to compensation. This, however, depends on what caused the disruption. If it wasn't the airline's fault - as was the case with the recent air traffic control meltdown - then the bad news is you almost certainly will not be entitled to a payout.

If you are delayed by more than three hours and the airline is to blame, the compensation starts at £220 for a short-haul flight to £520 for long haul.

If your flight was cancelled with less than a fortnight to go, you may also be able to claim compensation based on the timings of the alternative flight. The sum is based on the type of flight, length of delay

➔ **Continued** *on page 50*

Continued Page 49

and notice given, with payouts ranging from £110 to £520.

You should get your money back for all parts of the ticket you have not used. For instance, if you had booked a return flight and the outbound leg was cancelled, you should get the full ticket cost back.

Can I claw back cash spent on replacement flights?

The fallout from cancelled flights is particularly acute for people who book their own flights and accommodation, as Juliet Stott and her family discovered when Jet2 sent them a text cancelling their flight to Sicily and offering a refund six days before they were due to leave (see below). They faced a choice between ditching their summer holiday, though they had already shelled out thousands for accommodation etc, or buying new flights. Until Guardian Money stepped in, they seemed to be struggling to get the extra £1,600 they forked out paid back to them.

There will be many others who, now they are back home, are engaged in similar battles - anecdotally, there are lots of horror stories out there. Many airlines are likely to have been inundated with calls, emails and letters from unhappy customers, with some warning of lengthy response times.

Martyn James, a consumer rights campaigner, says airlines are sometimes so focused on compensation that they miss the point about their other legal duties, such as providing alternative flights or accommodation.

He says of the Stott case: "Jet2 should have got them on the next available flight - either with them or with another airline, unless it wasn't safe to fly for whatever reason. This is usually designated by the Foreign Office website. As such, they should be repaying all reasonable costs due to the fact that they failed to do this. I expect to see loads of these cases after the air traffic control debacle."

Overbooked flights, or being 'bumped'

Sometimes airlines sell more seats than there are on the plane. Usually this happens on the grounds that



▲ *EasyJet, Tui and Jet2 axed flights because of air traffic control problems*

people do not always turn up but sometimes it is because they have had to use a smaller aircraft.

Being "bumped" from your flight is also called "denied boarding". If you volunteer, it is up to you and the airline to agree compensation. Often, airlines will offer cash or vouchers at the gate as an incentive. You are also entitled to an alternative flight or a refund.

If it happens without your consent, you are entitled to compensation, as long as you checked in on time. The amount depends on the flight type and the delay, with the compensation framework the same as for cancellations.

Can I get a refund for weather cancellations?

If your holiday was "curtailed" - to use the official term - you may be able to claim some compensation depending on your contract with the hotel or holiday company.

James says: "Legally we are in tricky territory here, as businesses are not generally responsible for things out of their control, like natural disasters or extreme weather. But they will have contract clauses covering what happens if the hotel or holiday firm cannot provide the service you have paid them to deliver. Under these circumstances, you may be able to get a 'proportional refund'."

If you had a two-week package holiday in Rhodes booked and it was cancelled seven days in, you could expect to get a refund for the remaining seven days.

If big changes to your itinerary were required, then the operator must offer an alternative holiday or a refund of the full package price. Generally, a change of more than 12 hours on a 14-night holiday is a significant change.

Where should I start?

Some airlines have a clause in their terms and conditions stating that passengers must submit claims directly, and you can usually find the best way to do this on their website.

You may also be able to claim on your travel insurance but ordinarily it will not cover things an airline is legally required to pay for - such as overnight accommodation. Some policies have a set amount they pay out, minus any excess, for delays over a certain period or cancellations.

Can I claim extra cash I had to spend to get home?

The rules around compensation for costs incurred as a result of flight cancellations and delays are less clear-cut, says James.

A so-called "direct loss" is money lost as a direct result of the situation. For example, having to buy another plane ticket if the airline cannot find you an alternative. Airlines can be real sticklers for paperwork with these claims, even if it is their fault, he says. So keep your boarding card, forms and any other evidence.

Getting all your money back is by no means guaranteed. If the airline feels you have booked an upgraded seat, for example, then it may pro rata a refund depending on the prices at the time.

If your claim is rejected

From compensation claims to refund requests, there has been a logjam with airline complaints in recent years, largely owing to the Covid pandemic. However, some carriers have been shirking their responsibilities.

If an airline does not resolve your complaint to your satisfaction, escalate it via their alternative dispute resolution body (ADR). They should provide details of the relevant scheme, or use the list on the CAA website to find it.

If your airline is not in a scheme, try the CAA's passenger advice and complaints team (Pact). It will consider your case and, if it thinks it is valid, take it up with the firm. However, Pact does not have legal powers to impose a solution.

As a last resort, you can take legal action against the airline.



▲ *Overbooking is not uncommon on airlines such as Ryanair, but is it now happening more often than before?* PHOTO: SIMON LEIGH/ALAMY

From bad to worse

What I learned from a 26-hour Ryanair delay

Patrick Collinson endured two days of misery at the end of his holiday after he and others were bumped off an overbooked Ryanair flight

Our summer holiday, in Spanish Galicia and northern Portugal, was glorious. But our return, on Ryanair, turned into disaster after the airline booked too many people on to the flight.

What followed was two days of airport misery. Along the way we were surrounded by armed police and marched away; rerouted on two flights via another country; denied the food and drink we knew we were entitled to; got no sleep in a smoky and noisy hotel room; and repeatedly given contradictory information about our flights and our rights.

Fortunately we were not part of the air traffic control meltdown last week that hit hundreds of thousands of passengers. In our case it was an overbooking problem that was entirely the responsibility of the airline.

The 26-hour delay happened despite booking and paying for the August flight in February, at a full price (€228 for one-way, Porto to Dublin), and paying for priority boarding.

Overbooking is not uncommon on airlines. It is when they deliberately sell too many seats, guessing that some people won't turn up - enabling them to increase the profit they make on every flight. Or when they have a different plane available on the day, with fewer seats on it than they sold.

That's what Ryanair had done - as we later found out, it had booked us on to a Boeing 8200, which has 197 seats, but turned up with a Boeing 800, which has eight fewer seats.

Given that Ryanair is now flying at very nearly full capacity - it said this week that it was carrying record numbers of passengers and had a "load factor" of 96% - every time this happens, it ensures misery for customers.

Jet2 woes 'We had to pay out £1,600 after the airline cancelled our flight'

A family told us they were left £1,600 out of pocket after their flight to Sicily was cancelled six days before their summer holiday - forcing them to scrabble to make alternative arrangements.

Juliet and Josh Stott and their two daughters aged 13 and nine, who live in North Yorkshire, were due to fly from Leeds Bradford airport to Catania on 26 July, and then return a fortnight later.

But on 20 July, Jet2 texted them to say that as a result of fires at Catania airport the previous week, it had cancelled their flights and would give them a refund. However, they had already paid out several thousand pounds for accommodation and car hire.

"The only other flight out of the UK on that date [to Sicily] was from Heathrow with British Airways," said Juliet Stott. "We had to travel down from Yorkshire to London on 25 July, stay the night in a hotel at the airport and pay for parking. At the other end, we had to fly to a different airport (Palermo), switch car hire and drive for three and a half hours to get to our hotel."

Speaking this week, she added: "We've since come back and it seems neither Jet2 nor our travel insurer, the Post Office, will pay our additional expenses incurred, which I'm incensed about.

"Our original flights cost us £1,558. Our four return flights with BA cost us £2,866, plus £359 for the hotel and parking at Heathrow. The difference is £1,667, which is what I'm looking to recoup."

Stott said the Post Office claims team told them that because the family decided to go ahead with their trip, "they won't pay up". She adds: "I no longer feel confident



▲ *Juliet Stott's family were forced to buy new flights to get their holiday*

when going away that I'm going to be covered for every eventuality … I thought I was buying a product that covered me for everything.

"As for Jet2, they texted and told us they'd cancelled our flights. There was no mention of 'contact us and we'll help you find an alternative flight'."

A Post Office spokesperson said: "Unfortunately, our customer chose to purchase a basic insurance policy … Customers are given the option to buy a trip disruption add-on … The base insurance plan does not cover cancellation due to the destination airport not being open, although, given the unusual circumstances, this would have been covered by the trip disruption add-on to the policy."

Guardian Money approached Jet2 for a response. It told the family on Monday that it was "still experiencing some delays in responding to our customers".

On Wednesday there was a happy ending to this tale when Jet2 rang the family to say it would pay them £1,555 for their additional costs. "Jet2 say it will be with us in five working days," Stott told us.

Rupert Jones

What airlines are supposed to do in this situation is ask for volunteers to come forward, with an incentive such as cash or flight vouchers. But it wasn't the path Ryanair followed in our case.

The first inkling of our impending misery was at breakfast time in Porto, when we checked in for our 4.35pm flight. Our boarding pass gave us seat numbers "00" and stated that our seats would be "assigned at gate".

If you are ever given a "00" seat on Ryanair, be very afraid.

We left early for the airport, nervous about what might happen.

At the gate, things got a lot worse. The flight was delayed by an hour but Ryanair then started bringing passengers forward. We went up with our tickets only to be told to stand aside. We would not be "assigned at gate" after all.

Behind us, a Portuguese young man, desperate to return to his wife in Dublin, argued with the agents robustly but politely.

Minutes later, four, maybe five, burly police officers, armed with guns and batons, arrived at the desk. The agent pointed to us, and we and other passengers were kettled to one side. About an hour later, we were marched through the airport by the police, and released only on the other side of security.

At the Ryanair helpdesk, the situation went from bad to worse. The only way Ryanair could get us back home to Dublin was for us to come back the next day, take a flight to London Stansted, wait there for seven hours and then take a flight home to Dublin.

We were then made to wait for more than an hour while the agent searched for a hotel room for us.

We were told that our seats would be 'assigned at gate'. If you are ever given a '00' seat on Ryanair, be very afraid

A different, rather more kindly, Ryanair rep took us to the bus to take us to the hotel. Along the way, she said the overbooking problem was happening more often.

In the morning, tired and hungry, we headed back to Porto airport. Mercifully, the Stansted leg of our journey took off on time. But on arrival at Stansted, we had no choice but to shuffle back through the UK border and then re-enter the airport.

I approached the main Ryanair helpdesk at Stansted, Ryanair's biggest base. After waiting patiently in line, I asked the Ryanair rep: was there any possibility of getting on to the earlier, 7.10pm flight to Dublin? And maybe some assistance with food and drink, given we were anticipating a further six-hour wait, entirely caused by Ryanair?

No chance, he said. The 7.10pm flight was fully booked and we would have to fly at 9.35pm.

Wearily, we went through security again. But not one to give up, and now airside, I went to the next Ryanair helpdesk. A miracle happened: in complete contradiction to what we had been told minutes earlier, the rep said: "The 19.10 is now minus four [passengers], so we should be able to get you on that. And we should be able to get you food and drink vouchers – we'll have to email someone and get them printed off for you. Come back in an hour."

Back in Dublin, landing 26 hours after our scheduled arrival, I sought our €250 compensation. I had to make all the running to secure it.

We put a number of questions to Ryanair. The airline sent us a short statement.

It said: "Due to minor technical issues with the original aircraft, we were forced to make an aircraft change from an 8200 (197 seats) to an 800 (189 seats). As a result, a very small number of passengers on this flight from Porto to Dublin (12 August) were moved to the next available flight to Dublin (via Stansted) departing the following day.

"This passenger was provided with full duty of care including overnight accommodation and meals as entitled under EU261, and €500 compensation was processed to this passenger on 21 August."

Consumer champions
Miles Brignall



My partner's being chased for another Smith's debts

For more than a decade, my partner, who has the common name Christopher Smith, has been mistaken by credit reference agencies for another person with the same name and date of birth.

The other Christopher Smith has lived in numerous places and seems to leave properties without paying his bills – so utility companies and councils chase my partner for this money. The two men have different middle names but this doesn't appear to make any difference.

As a result of the other Christopher Smith's debts, my partner has had his credit score lowered, credit refused and had councils, companies and debt agencies claiming he owes them money.

He has tried to get to the bottom of the situation many times, and has successfully challenged parts of his credit score. However, he has not been able to eradicate the problem elsewhere in his records.

This morning, a man from Birmingham city council "enforcement" rang to pursue unpaid money, although the man didn't seem to actually work for the council.

The situation seems beyond ridiculous – I cannot believe my partner has to live like this. It is a constant source of stress for him, and it affects his financial decisions. He even changed his surname five years ago but this has not made any difference. The fraudster seems to live in the Midlands but we live in Somerset. Is there anything you can do to help, please?
JC, *by email*

This is an abridged version of a longer letter, and I can see why you are both so frustrated – not least because at some stage you may wish to apply for a mortgage. Unless you deal with this now, this could scupper those plans.



▲ *Metro Bank refused to tell a reader why they failed its validation process*

To get an expert view on this, I asked James Jones, a longtime expert at the credit reference agency Experian, for some advice.

He said: "These can be tricky, as both name and date of birth are key identifiers. To try to put a stop to this, your reader should obtain a credit report from each main credit reference agency (Experian, Equifax and TransUnion), and then request a disassociation from the other person.

"He should also ask them to add blocks, if possible, to any debtor-tracing services they provide to clients, to help prevent his address being suggested as a possible new address for the debtor. If the reader's credit reports still include entries that aren't his, including linked addresses, these should be disputed with the relevant agency and removed. That should resolve things."

He has also offered to get the ball rolling at Experian, and that process has started. I fear you have several weeks of form-filling ahead but it needs to be done.

It is not uncommon for debt collection companies, for example, to send out letters to people with the same name, which amounts to "taking a scattergun approach in the hope that someone will pay," says MoneyAdviceOnline.co.uk.

Why do I keep failing Metro Bank checks?

I have an Isa with Metro Bank that I have had for 15 years or more. I moved house a few years ago and have recently been trying to update my address with the bank.

My problem is, I keep failing its security checks. During my frequent calls, I am asked numerous questions and passed from pillar to post. I had to complete a validation process, which I failed, but Metro refused to tell me why.

I suspected it was my email address, which I changed years ago – however, the old one wasn't accepted either.

I am constantly being told that I have to go to the nearest branch, which is 100 miles away. I've told Metro I can't get there, as I am not sufficiently mobile. Please help.
BC, *Devon*

Many moons ago, you were asked by Metro Bank to choose a telephone banking password or similar that is probably long forgotten. This is why I would suggest it is a good idea to write down these things in a secure way at the time.

Happily, I asked Metro Bank HQ if there was a way to resolve this without you having to schlep to Bristol, and I'm pleased to report that a resolution has been found.

Staff found the original paperwork, and this will allow them to compare your signature and update your address.

We used to receive quite a few complaints about Metro Bank but this is the first one in an age.

We welcome letters but cannot answer individually. Email us at consumer.champions@theguardian.com or write to Consumer Champions, Money, the Guardian, 90 York Way, London N1 9GU. Please include a daytime phone number. Submission and publication of all letters is subject to our terms and conditions: http://theguardian.com/letters-terms



Comfort Eating with Grace Dent: Live

The Guardian Live

Guardian restaurant critic and Comfort Eating podcast host, Grace Dent is going live. Katy Wix and Jimi Famurewa will be interviewing Grace in London and Manchester respectively.

As they all share in the joyous memories of their favourite comfort eats and cosy treats, you can join in on the delicious discussions with your own culinary questions.

Monday 9 October
London, Islington Assembly Hall
+ livestream with Katy Wix

Wednesday 11 October
Manchester, Contact Theatre
with Jimi Famurewa

In person | Online

Book your tickets at theguardian.com/comfort-eating-live or scan the QR code

@GuardianLive



ILLUSTRATION BY JAMIE WIGNALL

Money hacks How to make cash from what's in the attic

Jess Clark

Dig out old toys

Toys don't have to be 50 or 100 years old to be worth money. For example, Beanie Babies became a big collectible in the 1990s, and while the vast majority of these stuffed toys will not be worth much at all, some can fetch a high price - so it's worth checking your collection and seeing whether you have any hidden gems.

Some of the Beanie Babies that had limited production runs may be valuable, say experts - for example, the original royal blue Peanut the Elephant, which was launched in 1995 but quickly withdrawn and replaced by a light blue version. There are claims it could earn you a four-figure sum.

The website Beaniepedia says: "The Royal Blue version is one of the most rare and valuable Beanie Babies in existence, fetching high prices when sold." Meanwhile, a Beanie Babies Halo the Bear sold for £800 on eBay in June.

Job lots of toys can sometimes sell for a decent-ish sum if you don't have any particularly rare ones in your collection.

The same rules apply to Lego. Limited edition vintage sets in mint condition can sell for hundreds, or sometimes thousands, of pounds.

Chris Wharfe, the editor of Brick Fanatics, a website dedicated to all things Lego, says: "The most valuable sets tend to be those that have a limited run or are attached to a popular franchise like Star Wars.

"Even regular sets often skyrocket in price if they are sealed - stuff that you wouldn't necessarily expect, like an obscure Marvel set or a Castles or Pirates set from your childhood. Anything that's part of a series usually increases in value, too."

Wharfe says some good examples of valuable older sets are 10143 Lego Star Wars UCS Death Star II from 2005, 10182 Lego Creator Expert Cafe Corner from 2007 (the first modular building), and 6399 Monorail Airport Shuttle from 1990, "all of which are worth four figures new and sealed".

Other toys that can be worth money include pre-1998 Polly Pockets, some items in the My Little Pony range, and certain Pokémon and Yu-Gi-Oh! cards, says the website Save the Student.

Coins can be worth a mint

Again, they don't have to be hundreds of years old. Changechecker.org has a scarcity index, ranking the UK's most sought-after 10p, 50p and £2 coins based on how rare they are. The higher a coin ranks on the index, the more valuable it is likely to be.

Look out for coins with commemorative designs such as the Kew Gardens 50p, which has a score of 100 on the index. One of these recently sold on eBay for £147, attracting 24 bids.

Other rare 50p coins include the London 2012 Olympics judo, triathlon and football designs.

Meanwhile, the scarcest 10p coin is the robin design, released in 2018-2019 as part of a series on quintessentially British icons. It features a robin inside the letter R, surrounded by snowflakes.

Jewellery, medals, etc

The over-50s website Saga linked up with the BBC Antiques Roadshow expert Mark Hill to identify some of the most sought-after collectibles. Costume jewellery can be a big earner if it is the right item - popular pieces from the 1930s onwards such as Miriam Haskell designs can go for thousands of pounds.

Meanwhile, they said that with medals, while condition played a role, "the greater the significance of its backstory, the more value it holds". A Distinguished Service Cross sold for £120,000 in 2011.

Hill said items to look out for included wristwatches and those related to key events, moments or people in history.

Choose a reselling site

Once you have a selection of items to sell, find out where to list them to get the best price. Start by checking what similar items have sold for on each platform.

> *'Lego sets often skyrocket in price if they are sealed'*
>
> **Chris Wharfe**
> *Brick Fanatics website*

EBay, probably the best-known reselling site, is simple to use. However, a specialist site may be worth considering for niche items.

Vinted is a simple way to sell high street clothes but items are typically priced relatively low.

If you are selling vintage or designer clothes, a specialist website such as Vestiaire Collective could be more effective.

While vinyl records are likely to command higher prices, if you have a glut of old CDs, you could make some cash by flogging them on an app or site such as musicMagpie. Each individual CD typically is not going to be worth much but, depending on the size of the collection, it could add up to a worthwhile amount.

There are also apps that cater to people trying to offload unwanted items fast. These can be convenient to use but you are unlikely to secure high prices, so they may be better for those flogging a large quantity of lower-value items such as CDs and non-rare books.

Bear in mind that platforms may charge listing fees or take a cut of the final price.

In-person options include car boot sales but, again, shoppers are often after a bargain, so they are unlikely to pay top dollar, even if your item is worth it.

Verify and price items

The better the item's condition, the more money you are likely to make. Check the quality of your item and list it accurately on whichever platform you choose.

You could visit an expert to give you an authenticity verification and provide a valuation. This will cost money, so will eat into your profits, but a verification of authenticity could help you sell faster and for a higher price.



Get your tickets for Football Weekly's away fixtures

Max and Barry are back on tour across the UK and Ireland. Prepare yourself for the full in-person (and livestreamed) experience of the pod squad's ~~no~~ nonsense punditry and unfiltered football analysis.

The Guardian Podcasts

Scan the QR code or visit theguardian.com/footballweekly23 to get you tickets



◀ Castlefield, Manchester
£385,000
The Britannia Mills project is the conversion of six industrial buildings overlooking the Bridgewater Canal in the city's creative district. At the top of Emery warehouse, on the fourth floor, is a two-bedroom penthouse with Dinesen timber flooring and views of the urban skyline. Deliberately sparse with oversized windows, the minimalist decor has pops of Mondrian colours on the radiators, shelving and sideboards. The canal towpath leads to local haunts such as MQ Coffee & Kitchen and Train CrossFit gym. *The Modern House, 020 3795 5920*



Fantasy house hunt
Warehouse-style flats

Compiled by Anna White

▶ Clapton, London
£850,000
Principal Lofts is the conversion of a Victorian school into residential properties that make the most of the exposed rafters, high ceilings and huge sash windows. Crisp-white plasterwork meets interior brick walls – half bare and half whitewashed – in the 117 sq metre, one-bedroom apartment for sale on the first floor. The frosted Crittall bathroom doors are a twist on the originals. On Sundays the road hosts a farmers' market just a short walk from the green spaces of Millfield Park, Victoria Park, Hackney Marshes and Olympic Park. *Urban Spaces, 020 3744 2500*



▲ Gun Quarter, Birmingham
From £215,000
Gunsmith House is a factory converted into 85 one- and two-bedroom flats. Each has wifi-controlled electric panel heaters and the walls and floors have been designed to reduce noise from outside. Prices for one-bedroom pads start at £215,000 and two bedrooms from £302,500, with completion planned for early spring. *Savills, 0121 200 4567*

▼ Hastings, East Sussex
£1.5m
A church house has been converted into a three-bedroom home with a two-bedroom annex apartment. The main red-brick property has a vaulted, triple-height living space with half-panelled walls and parquet flooring. Upstairs, the bedrooms are in glass pods, with curtains for privacy, on the mezzanine level. The house is a few minutes' walk from the seafront. *The Modern House, 020 3795 5920*



◀ Limehouse, London
£1m
Two once-dusty floors of a warehouse in the industrial heart of east London have been remodelled into a two-bedroom home in one of the most fashionable parts of the capital. On the ground and first (mezzanine) floors is this open-plan apartment with a vast kitchen-reception room and views over the Limehouse Cut – the oldest canal in London. The property has all the hallmarks of a loft-style pad, with exposed brick walls, Crittall windows and a metal spiral staircase. There is a communal roof terrace and a private parking space. *Knight Frank, 020 3869 475*



Financial and Legal checklist ☑

Money: whether you are spending it, saving it or speculating with it, it makes sense not only to exercise prudence but also to protect you and your family's interests with robust legal advice

Read more online! Visit *checklists.co.uk* and follow @checklistsocial

Get yourself out of a jam



Claimsline

After a car accident, UK motorists believe that their only option is to phone their insurance company. Claimsline are changing motorists' perceptions, and the status quo. They've helped over 17,000 people to date and have achieved a 4.9 out of 5 Trustpilot rating. They provide a same day, like-for-like replacement vehicle, only use manufacturer approved repairers and save their clients £537 on average off their insurance excess. Their service is free of charge.

Visit *claimsline.com* to learn more.

Invest with confidence in your financial future



Shepherds Friendly

Shepherds Friendly offer medium-to-long-term investment plans with the aim of providing the best possible returns.

Stocks & Shares ISA

Save tax-efficiently for your future from £30 a month, or with one-off deposits. The money you invest is managed by their experts who aim to maximise growth potential.

Junior ISA

From just £10 a month, start building a tax-free nest egg for your child's future to give them a head start in life.

Free voucher to start saving

Open a plan to receive a shopping voucher worth up to £50*. Claim your voucher using the link below, or quote 'Checklist20' if you open your plan via the phone.

Visit *shepherdsfriendly.co.uk/invest* or call 0800 526 249.

*For full voucher terms and conditions, visit *shepherdsfriendly.co.uk/love2shop-terms-and-conditions*. Capital at risk. In poor investment conditions, they may apply a Market Value Reduction (MVR).

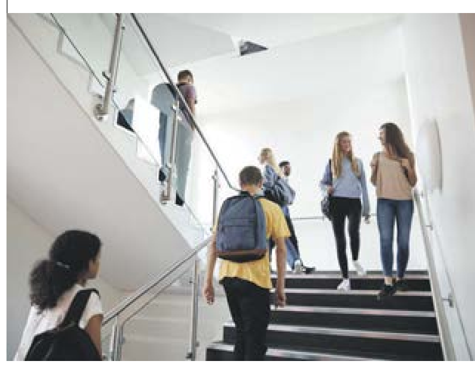
Winckworth Sherwood Education Department



The Winckworth Sherwood Education Department has a long tradition of advising schools and colleges operating independently of local authorities. Whilst originally the focus has been on voluntary aided schools, the firm now advises a large number of successful and growing multi academy trusts. This includes schools with a religious character and the diocesan and foundation bodies that support them.

Nationally, the firm advises the Church of England Education Office, the Catholic Education Service and a great many dioceses and diocesan boards of education. The firm is at the forefront of the issues affecting the sector and they regularly advise on and write about the following: school building failure caused by RAAC, funding shortfalls; SEND provision; EHCP challenges; equalities and disability discrimination; transgender; challenging pupil behaviour and exclusions; safeguarding, new free schools and school closure; strikes and union challenges; flexible working and workers' rights; Ofsted inspections and appeals; data protection; school collaboration and partnership working; academisation and the growth of multi academy trusts.

The Department is organised in four teams: school support, schools' HR and employment, property and academy conversion, each led by a partner, who is a specialist in their field. The teams work seamlessly together, and the sector focus provides a core strength which means clients receive timely, tailored advice which helps them both react to national and local events, such as Covid-19 and the recent national school strikes, as well as develop best practice and build robust systems to manage risk. Their lawyers help schools realise their dreams and avoid their nightmares.



Winckworth Sherwood

Visit *wslaw.co.uk* to find out more.

TAB – innovative lenders at your service



Seeking flexible commercial financing but faced with rigid lender requirements and obstacles? You are not alone.

Many lenders shy away from modest loans, multi-use assets and sophisticated borrowers, creating major pain points for business owners that need tailored mortgages.

The good news? There's a lender that breaks the mould – TAB. TAB provide specialised financing for clients that are often overlooked by traditional lenders. With a flexible lending model and a team of experienced professionals, including in-house legal experts and quality underwriters, TAB have successfully written over £385m since inception.

Now TAB are pioneering change with their new TAB Mortgage – an innovative term debt product. Through discounted exit fees, TAB Mortgage incentivises borrowers to achieve positive sustainability outcomes for their properties.

Whether you need funding for a semi-commercial purchase, development loan or cross-collateralised portfolio refinance, TAB provide custom solutions when other lenders just say no.

Tired of lender obstacles and box-ticking? Partner with TAB for the flexible, forward-thinking UK commercial financing you deserve. Their expertise navigates unique needs to deliver mortgage solutions that help your business prosper.

Don't settle for financing that doesn't fit. TAB listen and tailor loans for maximum value. Partner with TAB to get financing and expertise.



TAB.

Call 020 8057 9070 or email *enquiries@tabhq.com* today. Visit *tabhq.com* for more information. Any property used as security is at risk of repossession.

Millions of pounds in overpaid Stamp Duty remain unclaimed



The chances are, if you've recently purchased a second property, a mixed-use property or even a property within your pension, that you were not correctly advised in relation to the amount of Stamp Duty you should have paid on the transaction. The team at Rothley Law can review the transaction and if they consider you have paid the incorrect amount of Stamp Duty to HMRC, they can seek to recover any overpaid amount.

If you answer yes to any of the below, then please contact Rothley Law to see if they can assist you.

- Have you purchased a second home before you sold your original home?
- Have you purchased a property with an annexe?
- Have you purchased a property which had defects such as; damp, structural issues, electrical issues, asbestos present, incomplete kitchen or bathroom?
- Have you purchased a property with mixed use, ie part of the building has a commercial use, such as a shop?
- What makes Rothley Law different?
- SRA approved law firm
- They take a professional approach to claims and will only proceed with a claim if they consider it has a real prospect of success
- HMRC rebate claims are professionally prepared and are submitted with the relevant evidence to support such a claim.

ROTHLEY Law

Please contact their dedicated team for a free review on 0116 216 4000 or email them on *sdlt@rothleylaw.com* and they can advise whether you may be entitled to a Stamp Duty rebate from HMRC.

Financial and Legal Checklist is an independent spread of advertorial from Hurst Media Company. While every care is taken in ensuring that the content is in compliance with the Advertising Standards Authority and The UK Code of Non-Broadcast Advertising and Direct & Promotional Marketing (CAP Codes), the publishers assume no responsibility in the effect rising therefrom, and readers are advised to seek professional advice before acting on any information.

Simplify your tax life with expertise



Navigating taxes can be daunting. Sidestep complications with the guidance of a seasoned HMRC tax agent. Their mandate? Representing you in all tax-related HMRC matters. These professionals decode tax regulations, offer clarity on HMRC stances, assure compliance and directly engage with HMRC for you.

Why consider a tax expert?

- Accuracy: ensuring correctness in your tax details
- Insight: tailored guidance ensures compliance, navigates HMRC queries and upholds all tax duties
- Timesaving: no more wading through complex tax jargon
- Peace: they communicate directly and effectively with HMRC, so you don't have to.

Considering a tax agent? Enjoy a personal, high-calibre service tailored to your business' needs, ensuring peace of mind and financial wellbeing. Your finances deserve the best – let a tax agent be your trusted ally.

PIONEERING SOLUTIONS LTD

Visit *hmrcagents.co.uk* or email *info@hmrcagents.co.uk* to learn more.

The latest ethical investment – social housing



In the realm of investment opportunities, one trend has been steadily gaining momentum and capturing the attention of investors worldwide – social housing. With promising returns, this sector presents a lucrative avenue for financial growth and a chance to make a positive impact on society.

Social housing investments fund affordable living spaces for those facing economic hardships. As governments and organisations address housing crises, the demand for such accommodations has soared. This demand, coupled with the high ROI, underscores the viability of investing in social housing.

Beyond financial gains, investing in social housing aligns with socially responsible practices, reflecting a commitment to addressing societal inequalities. By providing affordable homes to those who need them most, investors play a crucial role in fostering stability and upliftment. Embracing social housing investments not only reaps substantial rewards but also contributes to an inclusive society.

SECURE SOCIAL HOUSING

Visit *securesocialhousing.com* to find out more.

Carter-Ruck – bespoke solutions and unrivalled expertise



Carter-Ruck

Carter-Ruck are one of the UK's best-known and respected dispute resolution firms. The firm's clients range from national governments and multinational companies to SMEs and partnerships, as well as ultra-high-net-worth individuals and private family offices.

Carter-Ruck offer bespoke commercial solutions tailored to their clients' objectives and commercial strategies.

Their commercial disputes team advise on a wide range of matters (often of a multi-jurisdictional nature) including shareholder, director and partnership disputes, as well as high-value claims against financial institutions and professional advisers. They have a burgeoning reputation in international arbitration and litigation management. Carter-Ruck's commercial disputes offering is complemented by their unparalleled expertise and profile in reputation management, including defamation, breach of confidence and data protection.

Where appropriate and necessary, they are able to consider creative litigation funding solutions as well as access to the After the Event insurance market.

For more information on commercial disputes and how Carter-Ruck can help you, call 020 7353 5005, email *lawyers@carter-ruck.com* or visit *carter-ruck.com*

Managing your legal costs in divorce proceedings



The start of the new school year in September often brings new clients seeking advice on how to progress a divorce. Here are jonesnickolds' top tips on how to adopt a constructive approach and keep your legal costs at a manageable level:

1. Get advice. Take advice from an experienced family lawyer to work out the parameters of the dispute, the way a court is likely to look at the situation and the likely outcome. It will help to set realistic expectations. In terms of arrangements for your children, you will need to consider carefully what is in their best interests. In terms of finances, you will need to think about an outcome which is fair to you both.
2. Take your time – don't rush to litigation. Divorce is hugely stressful and legal costs can spiral very quickly. It is important to take stock and think about the best way to progress discussions and reach a consensus. The jonesnickolds team find that those who rush to court often heap more pressure and costs on the whole family at a time when that can least be tolerated.
3. Be forward looking. It's hard not to look back and analyse what went wrong in the marriage, but the court will focus on the future. Legal costs increase dramatically where one party (or both) tries to punish the other and wants to litigate based on principles or to seek revenge with little regard for common sense and pragmatism.
4. Get your paperwork in order. It's easy to allow personal admin to fall to the bottom of the pile, but getting on top of your paperwork and checking what bank accounts you have, your mortgage details and your pension value will help you to give up-to-date information to your solicitor. This will assist them in advising you more comprehensively from the outset.

jn | Chambers TOP RANKED UK 2023 Jones Nickolds | The LEGAL 500 UNITED KINGDOM TOP TIER 2023

If you would like to arrange an initial call with one their solicitors, please contact jonesnickolds on 020 3405 2300 or *contact@jonesnickolds.com*

Immigration uncertainty: Maurice Turnor Gardner provides expert advice to those coming to the UK





Immigration advice has become essential

Limited options exist today for individuals and their families immigrating to the UK. It is still possible for individuals to relocate to the UK for work or study (and in some cases to bring their families). However, those coming for other reasons increasingly face an uphill struggle in navigating the UK immigration system. This, coupled with the UK's exit from the European free movement regime, has resulted in immigration uncertainty for a growing number of individuals and families looking to relocate to the UK on a permanent or long-term basis.

Maurice Turnor Gardner LLP's Immigration team, led by Colin Senez, guide those looking to relocate to the UK, as well as advising multinational employers on all the legal and practical aspects of sponsoring employees from overseas to the UK. The firm especially prides itself on its ability to distill the complex, and deal with the difficult applications that require a truly tailored approach.

A pre-eminent law firm for global private wealth solutions, Maurice Turnor Gardner is recognised in the legal industry for its expertise in the field of immigration, with accolades in the latest Chambers & Partners and Legal 500 directories for Colin Senez and MTG Managing Partner Emma-Jane Weider.

MAURICE | TURNOR | GARDNER

For more information, visit *mauriceturnorgardner.com*



Make a solicitor-checked will online for just £60

It has never been easier to get a fully legal last Will and testament. With Make a Will Online, you can make your Will on your phone, tablet or computer, 24 hours a day, and receive it by post or email. Simply answer a short series of questions about who you want to remember, check a summary and only pay when you are happy. You receive full guidance on the way and can contact the team with any questions. Your Will is then checked by a solicitor within two working days.

Trusted since 2008, Make a Will Online is the only online Wills service to receive approval from the Solicitors Regulation Authority. With £2m professional liability insurance, you get exceptional service for an exceptional price. A second Will is just £30 – perfect for couples – and there are no hidden fees.

MakeAWillOnline.CO.UK

Trustpilot

Get peace of mind in minutes – scan the QR code or visit *makeawillonline.co.uk*

To advertise with Financial and Legal Checklist, please call Hurst Media Company on 0203 478 6017

Subscribe to me-time*

*Save time for just you - and you'll save a few pounds, too



There's so much to discover with every copy of the Guardian and Observer. Tune into new ideas by becoming a subscriber and save up to 34%. From just £2.03 per issue, you can enjoy our award-winning newspapers and magazines each week at your leisure with our range of packages; from weekend to every day.

Package	Newsstand price per month	Subscription rate	Saving
Every day	~~£93.60~~	£60.99	**34% off**
Six day	~~£77.13~~	£53.99	**30% off**
Weekend	~~£32.93~~	£24.99	**24% off**
Saturday	~~£16.47~~	£13.99	**15% off**
Sunday	~~£16.47~~	£13.99	**15% off**

Prices above are monthly. Savings calculated are savings made per month against the retail price.

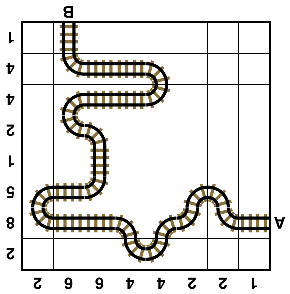
Subscribe today by scanning the QR code or visit theguardian.com/paper-subs

The Guardian | The Observer

T&Cs: Open to UK mainland and NI residents aged 18+. The savings calculation is based upon the saving made per month against the retail price of all products included in the subscription package. The Guardian and Observer reserve the right to end this offer at any time. Details correct at the time of printing. For full subscription terms and conditions visit theguardian.com/subscription/terms.

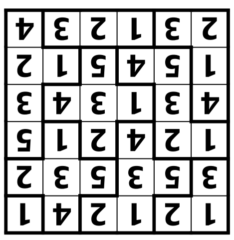
Puzzles

Solutions

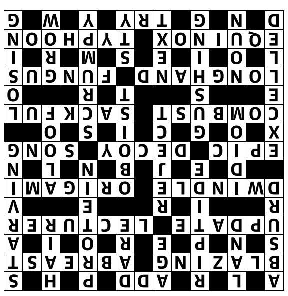


Train tracks

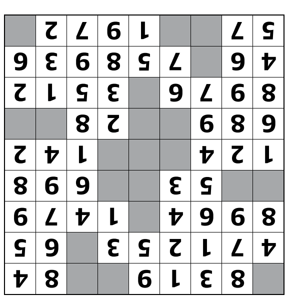
Word wheel
THREEFOLD



Suguru



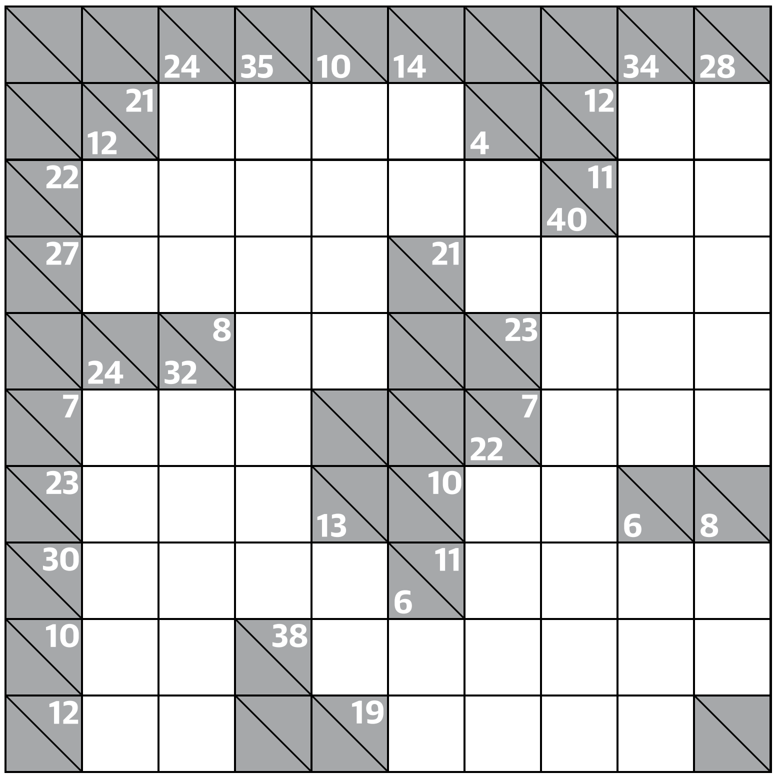
Codeword



Kakuro

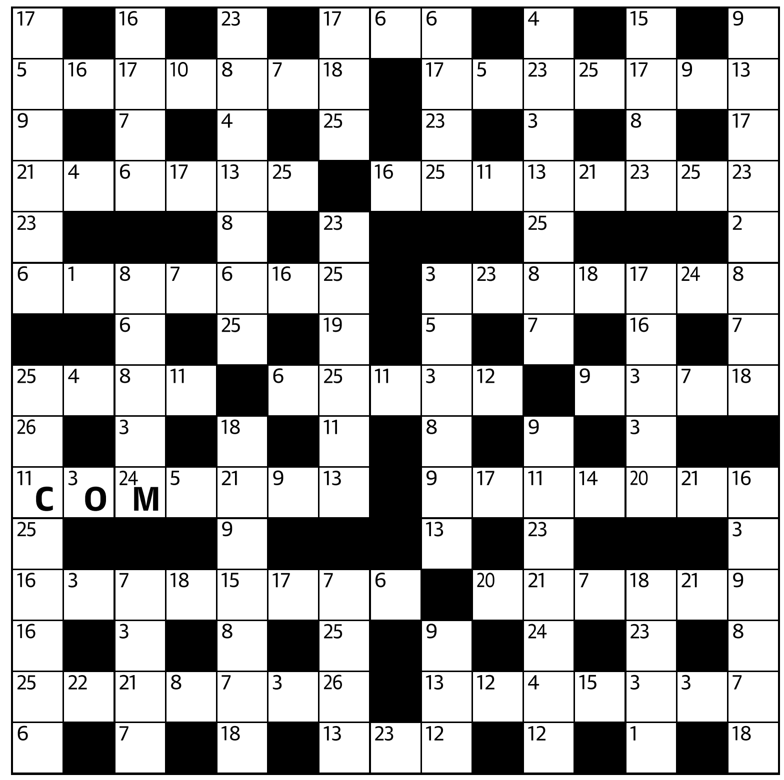
Kakuro

Fill the grid so that each block adds up to the total in the box above or to the left of it. You can only use the digits 1-9 and you must not use the same number twice in a block.

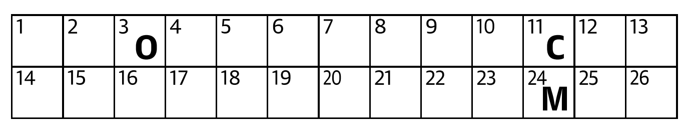


Codeword

Crack the code to fill in the crossword grid. Each letter of the alphabet makes at least one appearance in the grid and is represented by the same number wherever it appears. A number of letters have been decoded to help with the identification of other letters and words in the grid.

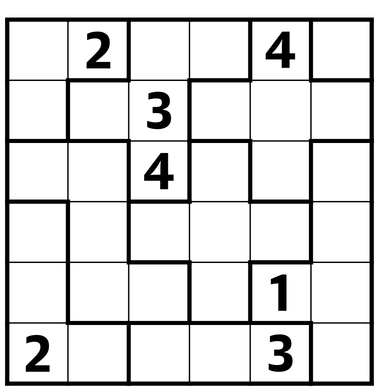


A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



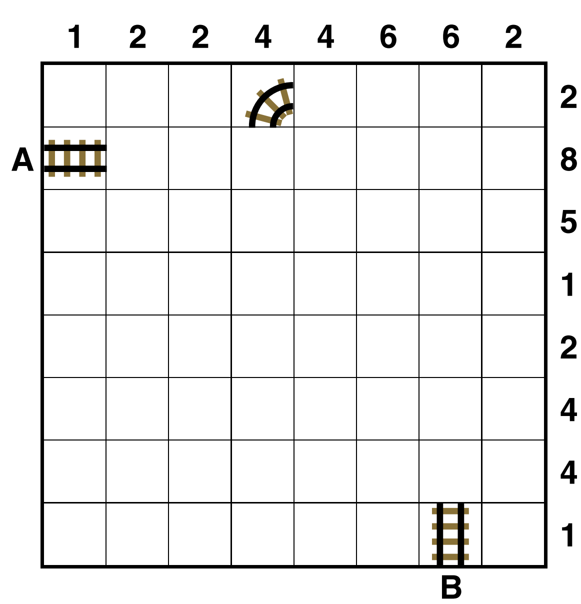
Suguru

Fill the grid so that each square in an outlined block contains a digit. A block of two squares contains the digits 1 and 2, a block of three squares contains the digits 1, 2 and 3, and so on. No same digit appears in neighbouring squares, not even diagonally.



Train tracks

Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of rail go in each row and column. There are only straight rails and curved rails. The track cannot cross itself.



Time on your hands?

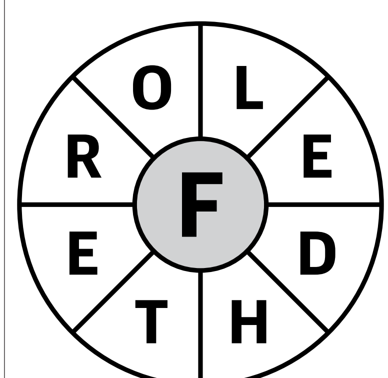
Stay connected and keep in touch with your friends with our new Puzzles mobile app

You can access more than 15,000 crosswords and sudoku and solve puzzles online together. Download The Guardian Puzzles app and try it for free now.

theguardian.com/puzzlesapp

Word wheel

Find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the central letter and at least two others. Letters may be used only once. You may not use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one nine-letter word to be found. Target: excellent 39, good 32, average 24.



Puzzles

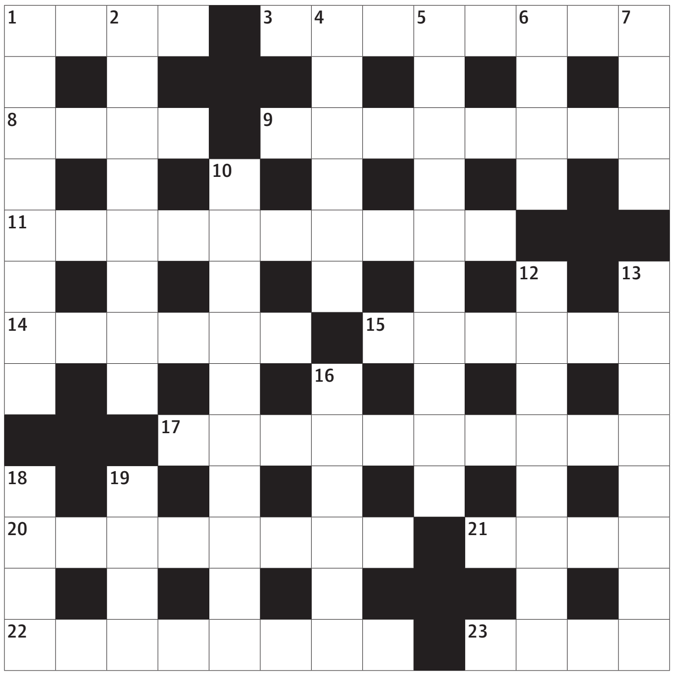
Quick crossword no 16,644

Across

1 Diddly-squat (4)
3 Natives of Lusaka (8)
8 American space agency (4)
9 Aversion to effort (8)
11 Short piece of instrumental music performed between acts of a play (10)
14 Burning (6)
15 For the time being (Latin/abbr) (3,3)
17 Disreputable person (informal) (10)
20 Death notice (8)
21 Sparkling wine (4)
22 Supervisor (8)
23 Religious song (4)

Down

1 Autonomous archipelago off the East African coast, part of Tanzania (8)
2 Colonise again (8)
4 Stunned (6)
5 Swift and violent military offensive, involving intense aerial bombardment (10)
6 Peak (4)
7 Mediocre (2-2)
10 Tropical American fruit with white oily meat and hard brown shells (6,4)
12 Arrange in layers (8)
13 Adorn conspicuously – lamb zone (anag) (8)
16 Peter Pan author (6)
18 Stupid and incompetent American fool (informal) (4)
19 Dimensions (4)



Yesterday's
Quick crossword

Solution no 16,643

C	H	A	N	G	E	O	F	H	E	A	R	T
■	O	■	O	■	S	■	L	■	N	■	I	■
G	N	A	T	■	C	H	O	W	C	H	O	W
■	O	■	O	■	A	■	R	■	L	■	T	■
G	R	A	N	D	P	I	A	N	O	■	■	■
■	A	■	■	■	E	■	■	■	S	■	E	■
B	R	O	W	S	E	■	E	Y	E	I	N	G
■	Y	■	O	■	■	■	Y	■	■	■	C	■
■	■	■	R	E	N	D	E	Z	V	O	U	S
■	F	■	S	■	Y	■	L	■	I	■	M	■
V	A	L	H	A	L	L	A	■	V	I	B	E
■	K	■	I	■	O	■	S	■	I	■	E	■
L	E	A	P	I	N	T	H	E	D	A	R	K

Stuck? For help call **0906 200 83 83**. Calls cost £1.10 per minute, plus your phone company's access charge. Service supplied by ATS. Call **0330 333 6946** for customer service (charged at standard rate).
Want more? Get access to more than 4,000 puzzles at theguardian.com/crossword. To buy puzzle books, visit www.guardianbookshop.com or call **0330 333 6846**.

Sandwich sudoku

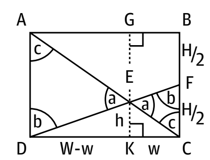
Medium

Place the digits from 1-9 in each row, column and 3x3 block. The clues outside the grid show the sum of the numbers placed between the 1 and 9 in that row or column.

								6	0
		9					4		3
									0
									7
			8		7				3
									0
									16
	1					2			6
5									6
6	0	8	5	18	35	4	29	8	

Chris Maslanka
Solutions

Pyrgic: 1 To convert temperatures we use a *linear* equation: F = 32 + 5C/9 (the scales have different size degrees AND different zeros); to convert *differences* we use a *proportionality*: F = (9/5)C (the degrees have different sizes). It should be 7.2 degrees F warmer. Thanks to Andrew Gunn for spotting this common but innumerate mistake. **2** Choosing 5 is equivalent to choosing which 6 to leave. So the number of ways of choosing 5 is the same as the number of ways of choosing 6. **Point to ponder** The number of ways of choosing 6 is the same as for 5 so why is not the number of ways of choosing 7 the same as for 6? **3** Andy showed f(n + 1) – f(n) = $[3^{(2n + 2)} + 7] – [3^{(2n)} + 7] = 3^2[3^{(2n)}] – 3^{[2n]} = [3^{(2n)}][9 – 1] = 8.[3^{(2n)}]$ – a multiple of 8. This holds for all allowed n; so f(n) – f(n – 1) is also a multiple of 8. If N|8 means "N is a multiple of 8", then consider [f(n) – f(n - 1)] + [f(n – 1) – f(n – 2)] + ... + [f(1) – f(0)]. Inner terms cancel (the series "telescopes"), leaving f(n) – f(0). But each square bracket is a multiple of 8 as we showed; so so is their sum and so is [f(n) – f(0)]||8. That is, $[3^{(2n)} – 1]$||8. We may add 8 [Why?]; so $[3^{(2n)} – 1 + 8]$||8; ie $[3^{(2n)} + 7]$||8. Candy did it less ploddingly: $3^{(2n)} – 1 = (3^n – 1)(3^n + 1)$ – a product of successive even numbers. One must be a multiple of 2, the other of 4; so $[3^{(2n)} – 1]$||8. Adding 8 leaves the conclusion intact; so $[3^{(2n)} –1 + 7] = [3^{(2n)} + 7]$||8. **Point to ponder** Now do it by induction! If $[3^{(2n+1)} + N]$||8 what is N? **4** Triangles AED and FCE share the same angles a, b and c. [How do you know?] So the triangles are similar, EFC being half the linear size of AED as FC = AD/2; so E is 2/3 of the way across and a third of the way up KG. **Point to ponder** What fraction of the area of the whole is each of the 4 regions?

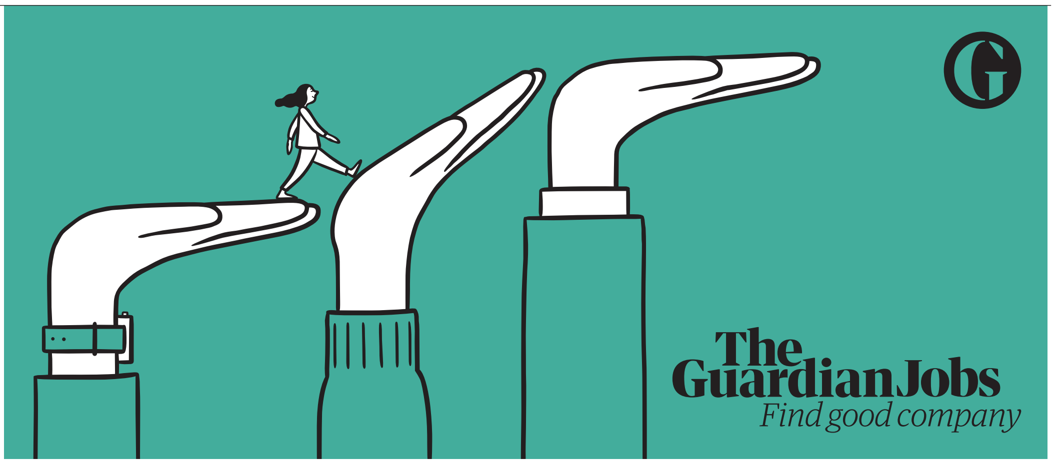


Wordplay: Wordpool c), d), b); **Jumblies** CALLIGRAPHY; **Dropouts** SUPPORT; **3-4-5** TOE, FOUR, BARON (O in BARN); **Cracker Barrel** Two Eds are better than one; **Missing Links** a) face/paint/box, b) good/cheer/leader, c) carriage/way/finder, d) quarter/master/piece, e) sham/rock/star, f) blue/fin/ale.

Take your next career step ...

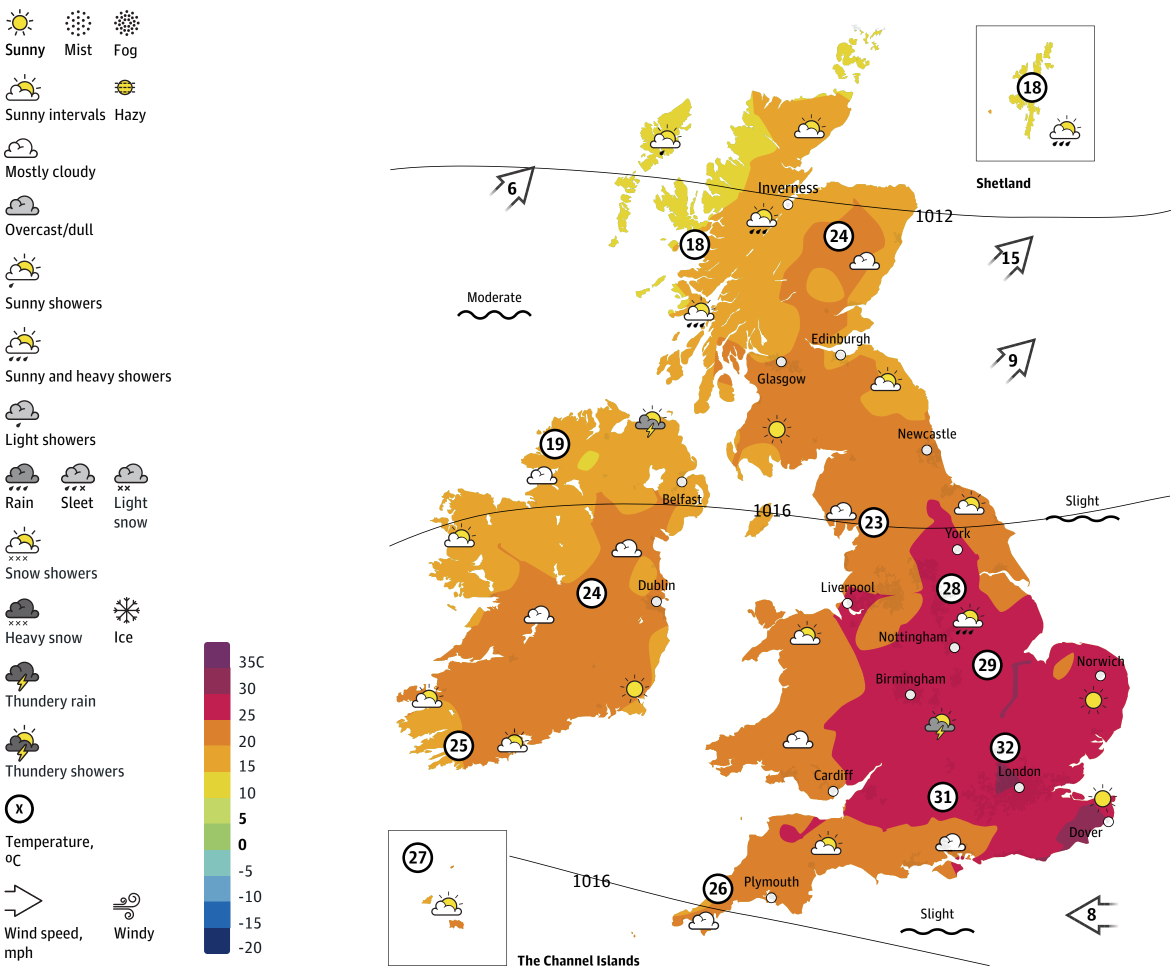
Finding the right career path can be rewarding, if you know where to look. Kickstart the year with a step in the right direction: Guardian Jobs. We'll help you search for a role that aligns your career with your skills, your interests and personality.

Find your new role, search Guardian Jobs



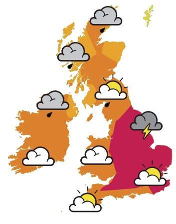
Weather
Saturday 9 September 2023

UK and Ireland Noon today

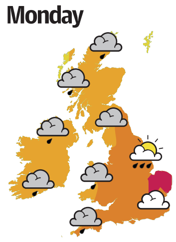


Forecast

Low 17 High 26
Tomorrow



Low 17 High 21
Monday



Carbon count

Daily atmospheric CO_2 readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):

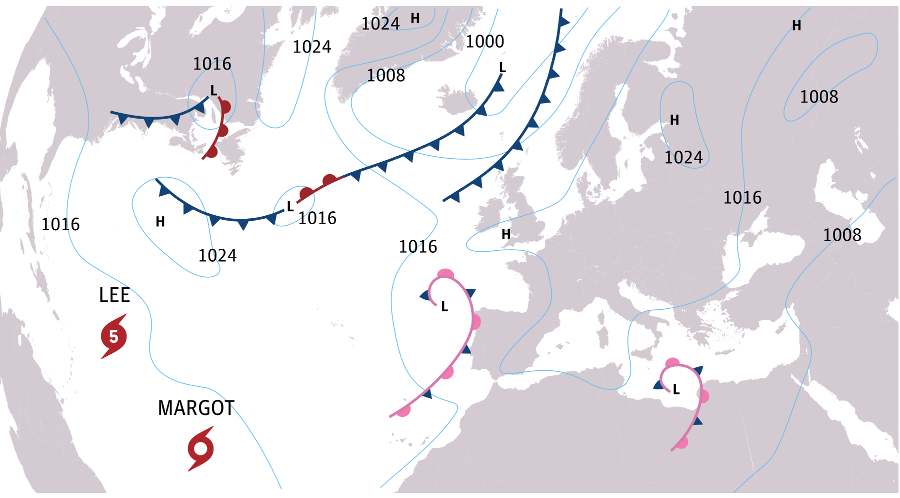
Latest	
05 Sep 2023	418.84
Weekly average	
27 Aug 2023	419.27
08 Sep 2022	416.42
08 Sep 2013	394.45
Pre-industrial base	*280*
Safe level	*350*

Source: NOAA-ESRL

Around the UK

	Lows and highs		Precipitation	Air pollution
London	19	32	25%	Low
Manchester	17	26	70%	Low
Edinburgh	15	25	45%	Low
Belfast	15	23	55%	Moderate
Birmingham	16	29	55%	Moderate
Brighton	17	27	5%	Moderate
Bristol	18	26	10%	Moderate
Cardiff	18	27	10%	Moderate
Newcastle	14	26	65%	Low
Penzance	17	23	10%	Moderate

Atlantic front



Cold front
Warm front
Occluded front
Trough

High tides

Source: © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Times are local UK times

Aberdeen	**1018**	3.3m	**2246**	3.4m
Avonmouth	**0243**	9.0m	**1529**	9.0m
Barrow	**0750**	6.7m	**2029**	6.9m
Belfast	**0730**	2.7m	**1957**	3.0m
Cobh	**0059**	3.0m	**1353**	3.0m
Cromer	**0240**	3.8m	**1549**	3.8m
Dover	**0712**	5.1m	**1952**	5.1m
Dublin	**0820**	3.2m	**2046**	3.4m
Galway	**0202**	3.6m	**1436**	3.8m
Greenock	**0750**	2.6m	**2003**	2.8m
Harwich	**0728**	3.1m	**2029**	3.2m
Holyhead	**0707**	4.2m	**1946**	4.4m
Hull	**0211**	5.5m	**1458**	5.5m
Leith	**1112**	4.3m	**2344**	4.3m
Liverpool	**0728**	6.9m	**2012**	7.1m
London Bridge	**0927**	5.4m	**2216**	5.7m
Lossiemouth	**0820**	3.1m	**2051**	3.2m
Milford Haven	**0204**	4.9m	**1458**	5.0m
Newquay	**0103**	5.0m	**1356**	5.1m
North Shields	**--**	--	**1220**	3.9m
Oban	**0313**	2.6m	**1626**	2.8m
Penzance	**0034**	4.0m	**1327**	4.2m
Plymouth	**0040**	4.0m	**1402**	4.2m
Portsmouth	**0752**	3.7m	**2019**	3.7m
Southport	**0636**	6.6m	**1927**	6.8m
Stornoway	**0359**	3.5m	**1639**	3.7m
Weymouth	**0116**	0.2m	**1356**	0.3m
Whitby	**--**	--	**1252**	4.3m
Wick	**0758**	2.6m	**2023**	2.7m
Workington	**0756**	6.0m	**2040**	6.2m

Sun & Moon



Sun rises	0625
Sun sets	1929
Moon rises	none
Moon sets	1748
New Moon	15 Sept

AccuWeather.com

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather** ©2023

Lighting up

Belfast	1958 to 0648
Birm'ham	1937 to 0632
Brighton	1929 to 0628
Bristol	1940 to 0637
Carlisle	1944 to 0634
Cork	2003 to 0700
Dublin	1956 to 0649
Glasgow	1952 to 0639
Harlech	1947 to 0641
Inverness	1953 to 0635
London	1929 to 0626
M'chester	1940 to 0633
Newcastle	1940 to 0629
Norwich	1925 to 0620
Penzance	1950 to 0650

Weather tracker

An Omega block has been in place over Europe this week, leading to some extreme weather. An Omega block is a synoptic setup consisting of a high-pressure region sandwiched between two low-pressure regions, creating a shape resembling the Greek letter omega.

Storm Daniel developed over the Ionian Sea partly because of this setup, causing devastating flooding across central and eastern Greece. The region's warm seas also helped produce the moisture for the storm.

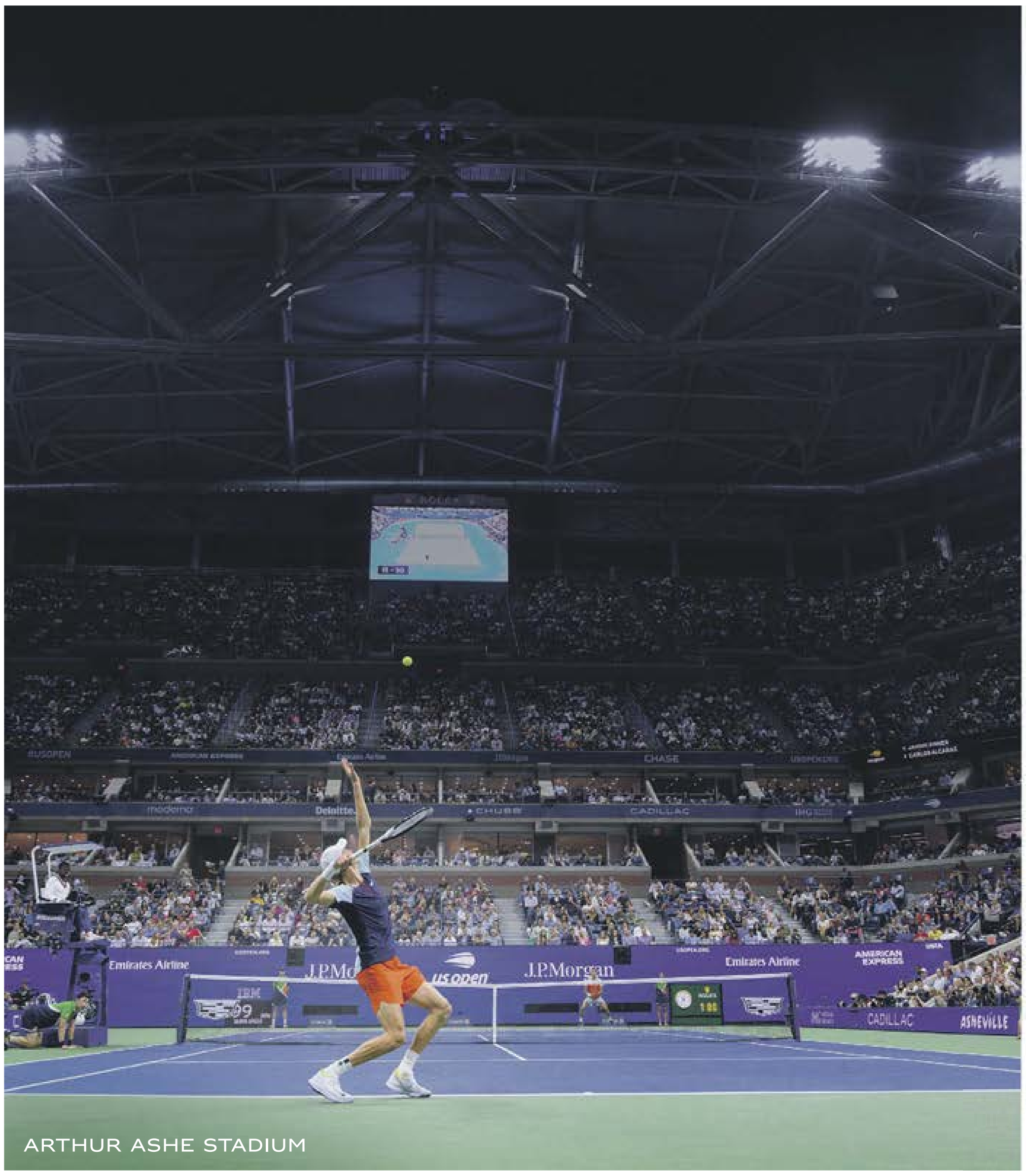
On Monday, Daniel moved inland over the Balkans, leading to torrential rains and thunderstorms. Central Greece recorded some of the highest daily rainfall totals since 2006. According to Meteo.org, 754mm (30in) was recorded in 24 hours at Zagora on the Pelion peninsula – equivalent to nearly a year's worth of rain for the area.

So far, 11 deaths have been attributed to the storm across Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria.

Thunderstorms also developed across Spain on Monday, causing rivers to overflow south-west of Madrid, leading to flooded streets and the closure of the metro. In Mas de Barberans, Catalonia, 240mm (9.5in) of rain fell in 24 hours on 2 September, its highest total in 23 years. **Faye Hulton** *MetDesk*

Around the world

Algiers	30	Lisbon	25
Ams'dam	28	Madrid	28
Athens	28	Malaga	28
Auckland	18	Melb'rne	15
B Aires	17	Mexico C	26
Bangkok	35	Miami	32
Barcelona	26	Milan	31
Basra	46	Mombasa	29
Beijing	22	Moscow	17
Berlin	31	Mumbai	31
Bermuda	31	N Orleans	34
Brussels	30	Nairobi	22
Budapest	30	New Delhi	32
C'hagen	23	New York	28
Cairo	34	Oslo	21
Cape Town	18	Paris	34
Chicago	23	Perth	22
Corfu	31	Prague	28
Dakar	33	Reykjavik	10
Dhaka	34	Rio de J	28
Dublin	23	Rome	30
Florence	34	Shanghai	32
Gibraltar	25	Singapore	30
H Kong	28	Stockh'm	22
Harare	28	Strasb'g	31
Helsinki	20	Sydney	18
Istanbul	28	Tel Aviv	32
Jo'burg	29	Tenerife	30
K Lumpur	32	Tokyo	30
K'mandu	28	Toronto	21
Kabul	33	Vancouv'r	20
Kingston	34	Vienna	28
Kolkata	33	Warsaw	26
L Angeles	33	Wash'ton	30
Lagos	30	Well'ton	17
Lima	21	Zurich	30



ARTHUR ASHE STADIUM


COCO GAUFF


IGA ŚWIĄTEK


CARLOS ALCARAZ

A LATE SUMMER NIGHT'S RITE

It's the final act of the Grand Slam® Tournaments. For those who step into the arena, the game ahead is unlike any other. In the city that never sleeps, the days are longer and the nights electric. Grandeur is the norm. The clamour of the crowd dictates its own rhythm. At Flushing Meadows, those who chase the crown will have to tame the tumult, harness its overwhelming energy and tap into unsuspected resources. The kind of resources that keep the crowds, like the nights, electric. Year after year. Season after season. **Welcome to the US Open.**

#Perpetual



OYSTER PERPETUAL DATEJUST 41

us open®

US OPEN TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS
USTA BILLIE JEAN KING
NATIONAL TENNIS CENTER, NEW YORK
28 AUGUST TO 10 SEPTEMBER 2023

ROLEX